

THE GREG BLEWETT OUTREACH PROGRAM  
SPORTING CHANCE CANCER FOUNDATION  
WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH NETWORK

## 2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Written and reported by  
Juana Xia Sun  
Regional Outreach Oncology Nurse Consultant



Women's and Children's Hospital  
ADELAIDE

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## ACRONYMS

<b>ALO</b>	Aboriginal Liaison Officers
<b>ASH</b>	Alice Springs Hospital
<b>ANZCHOG</b>	Australian and New Zealand Children's Haematology/Oncology Group
<b>ATSI</b>	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
<b>CAVUCS</b>	Child Adolescent Virtual Urgent Care Service
<b>CHSA</b>	Country Health South Australia
<b>CVAD</b>	Central Venous Access Device
<b>CVC</b>	Central Venous Catheter
<b>EOT</b>	End of Treatment
<b>EMR</b>	Electronic Medical Record
<b>GP</b>	General Practitioner
<b>HITH</b>	Hospital In The Home
<b>HSANZ</b>	Haematology Society of Australia and New Zealand
<b>IV</b>	Intravenous
<b>MRCHO</b>	Michael Rice Centre for Haematology/Oncology
<b>MRU</b>	Metropolitan Referral Unit
<b>NC</b>	Nurse Consultant
<b>NGT</b>	Nasogastric Tube
<b>PADAC</b>	Paediatric Antineoplastic Drug Administration Course
<b>PATS</b>	Patient Assistance Transport Scheme
<b>PICC</b>	Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter
<b>RDH</b>	Royal Darwin Hospital
<b>RDNS</b>	Royal District Nursing Service
<b>RSS</b>	Rural Support Service
<b>S/C</b>	Subcutaneous
<b>WCH</b>	Women's and Children's Hospital
<b>WCHN</b>	Women's and Children's Hospital Network
<b>YCS</b>	Youth Cancer Service

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## OVERVIEW

The Greg Blewett Outreach Program supports children with cancer and their families from regional and remote areas, who are receiving treatment or under surveillance at the Women's and Children's Hospital (WCH), Adelaide.

This is achieved through education, liaison and coordination between services. The program supports children and their families as well as health care practitioners across the multi-disciplinary team. Support is provided to other tertiary centres, regional hospitals, primary and community health care agencies, general practitioners (GPs) and remote health care centres.

Funding is provided from the Sporting Chance Cancer Foundation to employ a Nurse Consultant (NC) at the Michael Rice Centre for Haematology/Oncology (MRCHO) at 0.8FTE, including backfill for periods of leave which enables seamless care delivery.

## OUTREACH SERVICE PROVIDED THROUGH THE GREG BLEWETT PROGRAM

The Greg Blewett Outreach Program provides a nursing liaison role at the MRCHO for the paediatric oncology patients during treatment and following treatment who live greater than 50km from the WCH in Adelaide. The outreach service provided includes:

1. Leading development of partnership with regional centres, such as Royal Darwin Hospital (RDH) and Alice Springs Hospital (ASH). Continuing to build and foster relationships with shared care hospitals.
2. Coordinating professional networks with referring GPs, paediatricians, nursing staff and other relevant health professionals. Working closely with Country Health SA (CHSA).
3. Maintaining communication framework between WCH and the tertiary centres in Northern Territory & regional health care centres in Country SA.
4. Consulting with Rural Support Service (RSS) to ensure consistent and safe clinical practice.
5. Providing education to patients and their families, staff at WCH and external health professionals.
6. Mentoring and supporting regional health care teams that participate in shared care. Communicating regularly with local cancer care coordinators, clinical nurse consultants and local chemotherapy units.
7. Working directly with regional hospitals to ensure they have the expertise and supplies to support the patients in the local communities.
8. Conducting professional development, quality improvement and research.
9. Outreach presentations for the purpose of education and training. Liaising with local chemotherapy units to upskill the teams for paediatric care.
10. Contributing to the statewide cancer care coordination, providing paediatric input for service review.

## WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL REFERRAL AREA

The MRCHO at the WCH is the sole treatment centre for the children and young adults with cancer in South Australia and Northern Territory. It covers Mildura region in Victoria and Broken Hill in New South Wales, representing a unique referral area of over 2.4 million square kilometres with a relative low population and high percentage of Aboriginal children and young adults.

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## OUTREACH PROGRAM KEY SERVICE AREAS WITH REGIONAL CANCER CENTRES

The Greg Blewett outreach program supports shared care services in areas with appropriate infrastructure and workforce. Support and education are provided across 4 states, which includes 19 regional cancer centres.

The key service areas with the adult regional cancer centres can provide supportive services for paediatric oncology patients such as central venous access devices (CVAD) maintenance, administration of prophylaxis intravenous (IV) antibiotics and Nasogastric tube (NGT) maintenance. In addition, the staff in RDH are trained to administer low risk chemotherapy treatment for paediatric cancer patients. Key partnerships have been developed with the following sites:

- Northern Territory
  - ◆ RDH with formal shared care agreement
  - ◆ ASH
- Mildura region in Victoria: Mildura Base Hospital
- Broken Hill region in New South Wales: Broken Hill Base Hospital
- SA regions – Nine regional cancer centres with low complexity chemotherapy units
  - ◆ Ceduna District Health Services
  - ◆ Clare Hospital
  - ◆ Gawler Health Service
  - ◆ Kangaroo Island Health Service
  - ◆ Mount Barker District Solders' Memorial Hospital
  - ◆ Murray Bridge Solders' Memorial Hospital
  - ◆ Naracoorte Health Service
  - ◆ Port Augusta Hospital and Regional Health Service
  - ◆ Wallaroo Hospital and Health Service
- SA regions – Six regional cancer centres with medium complexity chemotherapy units
  - ◆ Mount Gambier and District Health Service
  - ◆ Port Lincoln Health Service
  - ◆ Port Pirie Regional Health Service
  - ◆ Riverland General Hospital (Berri)
  - ◆ South Coast District Hospital (Victor Harbor)
  - ◆ Whyalla Hospital and Health Service

The Greg Blewett Outreach nurse works collaboratively with local cancer care coordinators in the chemotherapy units to ensure safe and consistent care to be delivered closer to home for the paediatric oncology patients. The program is aiming to increase referrals to regional chemotherapy units to allow patients to be more connected to family and friends and to ensure their physical and spiritual needs are met, meanwhile reducing pressure on the parents to relocate for long periods or dislocating family members and improving the whole family wellbeing.

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## SA COUNTRY HEALTH CONNECT – 1800 944 912

SA Country Health Connect offers wide range of in-home and community-based services across regional SA. Some regional chemo units in SA only open 2-3 days per week, Country Health Connect local offices are able to cover the gaps, e.g. administering daily IV Caspofungin for paediatric Leukaemia patients. There are total 18 local offices in regional SA and open Monday to Sunday.

The Greg Blewett Outreach nurse works closely with WCHN Metropolitan Referral Unit (MRU) to send referrals to Country Health Connect local offices. The outreach service has connected with local offices in Adelaide Hills, Southern Fleurieu and Barossa/Gawler for:

- Administering Daily IV Caspofungin for paediatric Leukaemia patients
- Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC) / Central Venous Catheter (CVC) dressing changes
- Administering S/C Filgrastim
- Bloods taken from the central line
- Port de-accessing

## CREATIVE THINKING OF USING SA RDNS AT LOCAL OFFICES FOR PATIENTS FROM PERI-URBAN AREAS

SA Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS) provides a comprehensive range of community-based health and care services, delivering reliable, high quality home services, helping patients remain in their own home where they are most comfortable.

All the community care referrals from WCHN are sent to MRU to be connected with SA RDNS service, which is available for patients living in the Adelaide metropolitan area. There are significant gaps to children and their families who live in areas outside of district nursing referral areas.

Following a consultation with WCHN MRU, a trial of sending patients from peri-urban areas, e.g. Gawler, Lewiston, Williamstown and Springton to attend the local RDNS office in Elizabeth Service Centre for:

- IV Daily Caspofungin & S/C Filgrastim administration
- Wound care
- Bloods taken from the central line

## WCH HOSPITAL IN THE HOME (HITH) SERVICE

The Greg Blewett Outreach nurse works closely with WCH HITH to provide services for patients from outer metropolitan areas:

- Patient from Lyndoch (approx. 66km from WCH) to receive IV Caspofungin & S/C Cytarabine administration
- Patients from Port Elliot (approx. 83km from WCH) to receive IV Caspofungin administration
- Patient from Strathalbyn (approx. 58km from WCH) to receive IV Caspofungin administration & port re-accessing

## CONNECTED WITH MORE LOCAL HEALTH CENTRES FOR REGIONAL PATIENTS

- Angaston District Hospital (approx. 86 km from WCH) – provided management plan for unplanned presentation to the local hospital.
- Balaklava Soldiers Memorial Hospital (approx. 90km from WCH) – provided support and education on PICC dressing change.
- Booleroo Centre District Hospital (approx. 258 km from WCH) – provided support and education on paediatric assessment and fever with potential neutropenia management.
- Jamestown Hospital (approx. 212 km from WCH) – provided support on PICC dressing change.
- Snowtown Hospital (approx. 147 km from WCH) – provide management plan for unplanned presentation to the local hospital
- Streaky Bay Health Centre (approx. 695 km from WCH) – provided support and education on port flushes and bloods taken from the port.

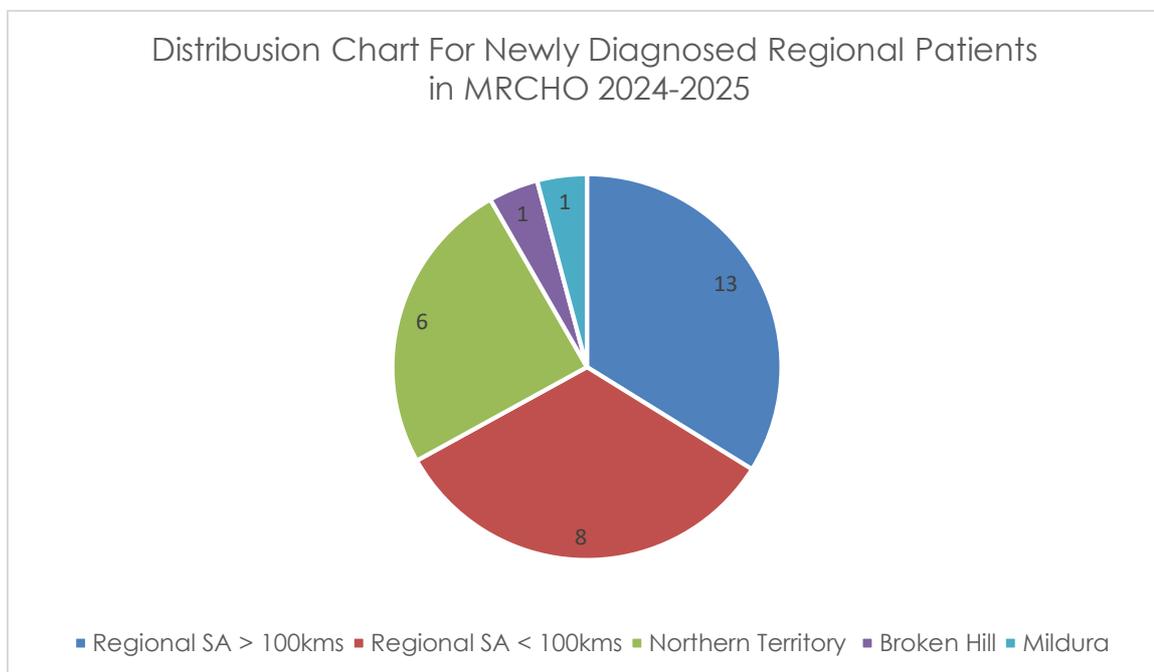
## STATISTICS FOR NEWLY DIAGNOSED PATIENTS AT MRCHO (2024-2025)

From May 2024 to April 2025, 70 new patients were diagnosed with cancer at the WCH Department of Haematology and Oncology, including:

- 21 Patients from regional SA
  - 13 patients from regional SA > 100kms
  - 8 patients from regional SA < 100kms
- 8 patients from interstate
  - 6 patients from Northern Territory
  - 1 patient from Broken Hill in Victoria
  - 1 patient from Mildura in NSW

Total regional patients: 29

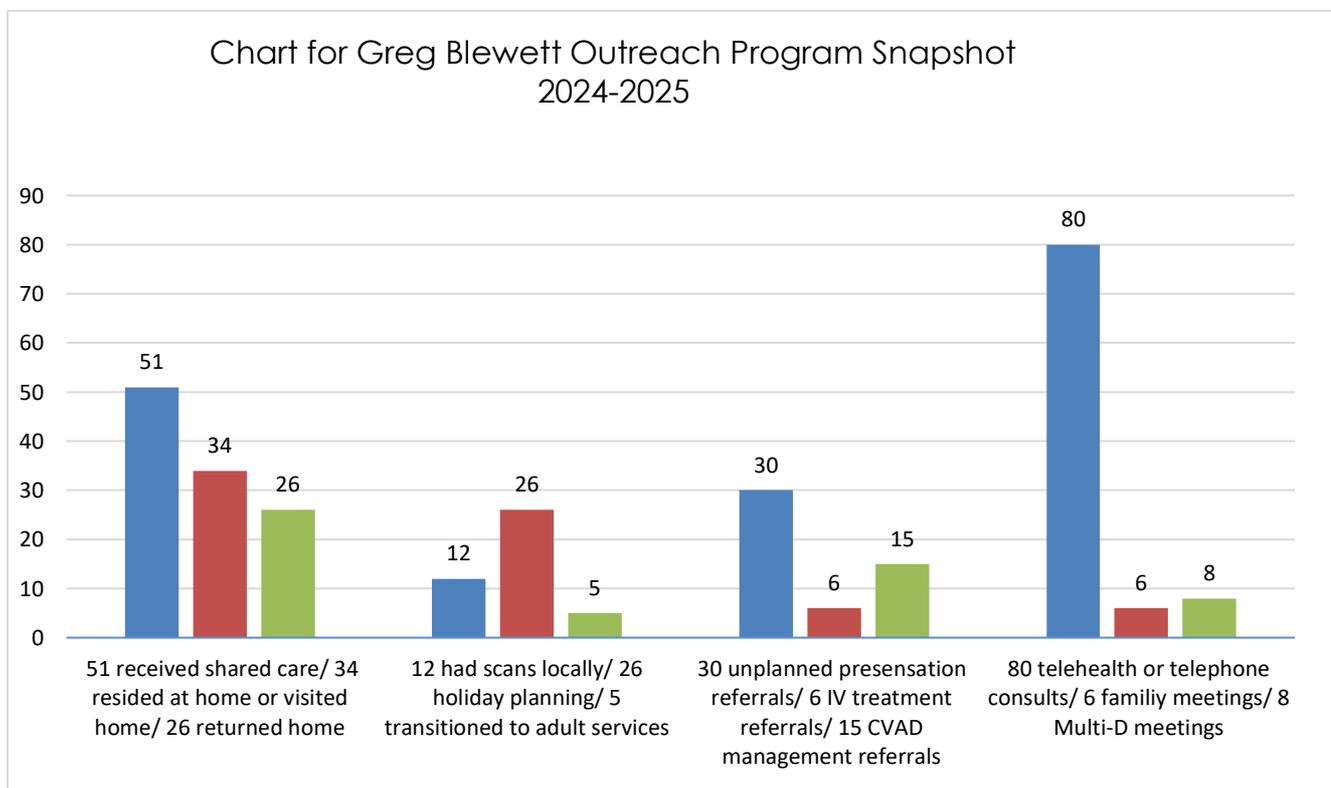
Approximately 41% of new patients are from regional areas every year. These children and young adults live outside of metropolitan Adelaide and some of them live as far as 3000km away from Adelaide.



## THE GREG BLEWETT OUTREACH PROGRAM SNAPSHOT 2024-2025

Total 113 patients under care of outreach service (*distribution map page 9*) - a 14% increase in total patients compared to the previous year:

- 55 patients on treatment
- 58 patients off treatment undergoing surveillance who required coordination of travel and appointment scheduling
- 17 patients of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) origin
- 51 patients received shared care and/or follow up within their local health care service.
- 34 families were able to reside at home temporarily or visit home during treatment with support of outreach service.
- 26 families supported to return home during and post treatment.
- 22 health care services including regional cancer centres and GP clinics supported to care for paediatric patients with cancer.
- 91 episodes of telehealth/health direct/telephone/meeting.
  - ◆ 80 consults
  - ◆ 6 family meetings
  - ◆ 8 multi-disciplinary complex planning meetings
- 30 patients received management plan for unwell presentation to their local hospitals.
- 6 patients received intravenous/subcutaneous medication administration at their local health care facilities.
- 15 patients received CVAD management services at their local hospital chemotherapy units.
- 12 patients had scans at their local health care facilities.
  
- 20 patients and their families received newly diagnosed patients education sessions.
- 29 patients and their families received outreach service education sessions.
- 11 patients and their families received discharge planning education sessions.
- 5 patients received their End of Treatment (EOT) summaries prepared by the Greg Blewett Outreach nurse.
  
- 26 families travelled to regional SA/interstate for holidays with support of outreach service.
- 5 patients transitioned to adult services and discharged from WCH.
- 2 patients relocated interstate.
- 1 patient relocated from regional area to metropolitan area.



2024-2025 TOTAL PATIENTS UNDER OUTREACH PROGRAM GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION



## SA CANCER PLAN IN CONNECTION WITH FULFILLING THE OUTREACH ROLE AND PROGRAM OUTCOMES 2024-2025

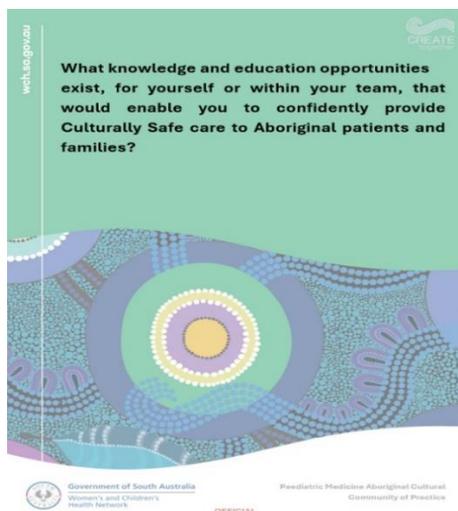
The draft for Consultation of SA Cancer Plan 2024-2028 was released in 2023. The vision of the plan is leading the way to cancer prevention and control with personalised care. The plan is based on five under-pinning principles and has six priority areas support the vision and build on and add to work being done at a national level to improve cancer care. Following extensive consultation and collaboration, SA Health has finalised the SA Cancer Plan 2025-2029.

On the cancer plan, some topics are related to regional patients and patients from ATSI background, some information is in connection with fulfilling the outreach role and focusing on the needs of regional patients and their families utilising a holistic care approach. This plan provides guidelines for future outreach service improvements and development.

SA Cancer Plan 2025-2029	The Greg Blewett Outreach Program	Program Outcomes (Achieved) 2024-2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approximately one third of the state's population live in regional or remote areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable access to services as close as possible to regional patients' home community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>51 patients received shared care within their local health care service.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For people living in rural and remote areas, 1.3 times more likely to die from cancer and lower survival rate than those living in major cities.</li> <li>Identify the education, support needs and training programs of local GPs to support them to manage the health needs of cancer survivors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work in partnership with local GPs to support them to provide fundamental primary health care for paediatric oncology patients who are under survivorship.</li> <li>Collaborate with survivorship Nurse Consultant (NC) to support adolescent patients through transition from MRCHO to local shared services.</li> <li>Work closely with small rural health clinics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22 health care services including GP clinics supported to care for paediatric patients with cancer.</li> <li>58 off treatment patients received outreach service.</li> <li>5 patients transitioned to adult services and discharged from WCH.</li> <li>Congress and Gap clinics in NT were supported to coordinate the surveillance care for regional patients.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure Aboriginal people to have access to timely, culturally appropriate, coordinated diagnosis and treatment of cancer and supportive care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know Aboriginal perspectives, values, and beliefs, provide culturally sensitive services based on the needs of Aboriginal people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17 patients of ATSI origin received outreach service.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase care as close to home as possible for oncology services in regional SA through innovative, flexible models of care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work collaboratively with RSS to enable shared care as close to home as possible while maintaining the highest level of safety and quality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>34 families were able to reside at home temporarily or visit home during treatment.</li> <li>26 families supported to return home during and post treatment.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An integrated Cancer Centre at Mount Gambier Hospital will be developed.</li> <li>The Mount Barker Hospital upgrades will include upgrades to chemotherapy services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aim to increase the referrals to local chemo units.</li> <li>Connect with the local cancer centres.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30 patients received unplanned presentation referrals to their local hospitals.</li> <li>6 patients received treatment referrals at their local health care facilities.</li> <li>15 patients received CVAD management referrals at their local hospital chemotherapy units.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve equitable access to cancer care for all people living in SA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aim to ensure all children and young adults with cancer from rural or remote areas and their families have equitable access to high quality, safe and coordinated clinical care, provided in an environment that is conducive to coping and recovery, as near to home as possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12 patients had scans at their local health care facilities.</li> <li>29 patients and their families received newly diagnosed patients education and outreach service education sessions.</li> <li>11 patients and their families received discharge planning education session.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New technologies of delivering care will enable changes to clinical practice, including the use of telehealth, virtual care as well as providing treatments in different settings such as in the communities or at home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to utilise telehealth to support regional patients to minimise unnecessary travel to Adelaide.</li> <li>Enhance telehealth capacity.</li> <li>Work closely with CAVUCS in WCH.</li> <li>Work closely with HITH in WCH.</li> <li>Work closely with MRU and RDNS.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>91 episodes of telehealth/health direct/telephone/meeting provided.</li> <li>Patients from peri-urban areas received RDNS and WCH HITH services.</li> </ul>

## THE GREG BLEWETT OUTREACH PROGRAM: ACHIEVEMENTS 2024-2025

- Provided newly diagnosed patients education in the MRCHO and outreach education sessions for patients and their families from regional areas.
- Provided clinical and day to day support to the MRCHO ward and clinic.
- Completed yearly reassessment for Paediatric Antineoplastic Drug Administration Course (PADAC) and provided clinical support as a chemotherapy training facilitator to MRCHO.
- Educated families on Child and Adolescent Virtual Urgent Care Service (CAVUCS) and the referral criteria to reduce the unnecessary travel and hospital presentations.
- Worked collaboratively with the MRCHO cancer care coordinators and survivorship team to prepare and provide EOT summaries for patients from regional areas.
- Provided support for the RDH nurses who have completed PADAC to maintain their skills.
- Participated in Youth Cancer Service (YCS) meetings for young people from regional and remote locations.
- Completed scheduling training course of EMR (Electronic Medical Record) to utilise the scheduling program to catch activities of the outreach service.
- Utilised the recommendations from the project "Improving Outcomes for Aboriginal Children Diagnosed with Cancer", to provide better services and to look for future service improvement for Aboriginal patients with cancer and their families.
- Aboriginal Cultural Learning Champion at MRCHO, Division of Paediatric Medicine in WCH, attending monthly meetings for:
  - ◆ joining with fellow champions to share experiences and learnings with a focus on planning for further improvement of care delivery for Aboriginal consumers and their families.
  - ◆ leading to culturally safe environments with a zero tolerance to racism.
  - ◆ driving quality improvements in the local unit area to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal consumers, families and communities.
- Participated in the Divisional Project "Aboriginal Cultural Community of Practice - Needs Discovery Initiative" to:
  - ◆ understand the divisional and local service improvement and team capacity building needs.
  - ◆ provide the most culturally sound and safe health care for Aboriginal patients and their families.
  - ◆ have a clear understanding of needs from a team perspective to form a strategic approach.
- Participated in Sporting Chance Outreach Study Day on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024 in Melbourne.
- Attended 2024 Australian and New Zealand Children's Haematology/Oncology Group (ANZCHOG) conference and Haematology Society of Australia and New Zealand (HSANZ) Education Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024.



Displayed question for Needs Discovery Initiative Project



Sporting Chance Outreach Study Day in Melbourne

## PRESENTATIONS

- 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024
  - Present the Greg Blewett Outreach Program at Sporting chance Outreach Study Day in Melbourne
- 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024 & 14<sup>th</sup> March 2025 & 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025
  - Present Regional Outreach Oncology Nurse Consultant Role at MRCHO
  - Present Aboriginal Cultural Community of Practice Project - Needs Discovery Initiative at MRCHO

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## THE GREG BLEWETT OUTREACH PROGRAM: LOOKING FORWARD 2025-2026

- Develop and implement education plan and utilise existing educational materials, focus on areas with increased levels of activity.
- Continue to work with the MRCHO survivorship team to support the regional patients who are under surveillance.
- Continue to provide support for the MRCHO clinical teams and allied health professionals.
- Continue to increase referrals to regional health care facilities to facilitate the administration of intravenous antifungal medication, prophylaxis intravenous antibiotics for paediatric oncology patients.
- Coordinate shared care as close to home as possible through the delivery of local services to local population in regional and remote locations.
- Work closely with RSS and CHSA, aim to get more staff accredited statewide in CVAD management to negate the need for families to travel to metropolitan hospitals.
- Continue to support the state-wide YCS, transition young adult patients from Michael Rice Cancer Centre to local shared services.
- Provide patients with flexibility to suit the need of individuals, including options of where supportive care is delivered, meantime, provide outreach service in more flexible ways with the continued use of telehealth, health direct, telephone and virtual service provision.
- Work closely with WCH social worker team to explore more options for better transport support, e.g. using Patient Assistance Transport Scheme (PATS) or Angle Flight Australia to improve coordinated care through the regional patient's cancer treatment journey.
- As the Aboriginal Cultural Learning Champion at MRCHO, facilitate a community of practice for multi-disciplinary clinicians within the division of paediatric medicine, strengthen links between the division and the Aboriginal health division, focus on learning about the experience of Aboriginal consumers, their families and communities, drive education and quality improvement initiatives to improve the experience, health and wellbeing of Aboriginal consumers.
- Work closely with WCH Aboriginal Liaison Officers (ALO) to receive support and advice relating to the care of Aboriginal patients.
- Focus on consumer engagement, work in partnership with WCH & regional consumer feedback team to improve the outreach services.
- Review the outreach nurse scope of practice to enhance the exiting services.
- Attend 2025 Sporting Chance Outreach Study Day in Brisbane.
- Attend 2025 ANZCHOG conference in Brisbane.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Greg Blewett Outreach Program was commenced at the WCH on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2009, the outreach nurse role has made a huge impact on the lives of many families from remote and rural areas.

The WCHN & MRCHO would like to acknowledge the generous assistance of the Sporting Chance Cancer Foundation. Without your ongoing support, it would be not possible to deliver the outreach services for regional children, young adults with cancer and their families from South Australian and Northern Territory.

Juana Xia Sun

Sporting Chance Cancer Foundation

Reginal Outreach Oncology Nurse Consultant