



Media release

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Landmark LGBTQI+ cancer resource released in Australia

Cancer Council delivers first of its kind publication for people affected by cancer in Australia's LGBTQI+ communities

This week, Cancer Council NSW as part of the Western Sydney University [Out with Cancer](#) research project in collaboration with Prof Jane Ussher, have released *LGBTQI+ People and Cancer: A guide for people with cancer, their families and friends*, a landmark publication and the first of its kind in Australia.

"We have developed this 80-page booklet to provide a guide to cancer and its treatment specifically for LGBTQI+ people – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other diverse sexualities and genders, as well as people with intersex variations," explains Chair of Cancer Council's National Cancer Information Subcommittee Jenni Bruce. "We have worked closely with Prof Jane Ussher and her team at Western Sydney University, LGBTQI+ organisations, health professionals and LGBTQI+ people affected by cancer to deliver a resource addressing the particular information needs of these communities."

The *Out with Cancer* research project shows that LGBTQI+ people experience higher levels of distress during cancer treatment and have poorer cancer outcomes. Prof Jane Ussher explains how the study highlights why this new booklet is needed, "We found that rates of distress were 3-6 times higher in LGBTQI+ communities than the general cancer population. Anxiety about disclosure of LGBTQI status was high, associated with fear of hostility and discrimination." The study found that distress was higher in adolescent and young adults, trans and non-binary people, those with intersex variations, and people living in rural and regional areas.

"You can't understate the power of displaying your organisation or practice's support of diversity with posters, flags and availability of specific LGBTQI+ resources," Prof Ussher concludes.

In 2013, renowned broadcaster and LGBTQI+ rights advocate Julie McCrossin was diagnosed with stage four oropharyngeal cancer caused by the human papillomavirus, or HPV. Ms McCrossin explains how important this resource will be for people affected by cancer in the LGBTQI+ communities and their families: "Many of us have experienced discrimination and rejection in our lives before cancer. The last thing we want to deal with when facing a potentially life-threatening diagnosis is an ill-informed response from the health professionals we are relying on for treatment and care.

"As a lesbian woman attending appointments and treatment with my long-term partner Melissa, it would be marvellous to see LGBTQI+ on a Cancer Council booklet offering information and support directly relevant to our lives." She explains that when she was a patient herself, she associated Cancer Council booklets with useful information and a feeling of hope and recovery: "A cancer centre displaying this booklet sends an instantly recognisable message that the team is truly welcoming LGBTQI+ patients. This will bring relief and a sense of support at a time when you really need it." Ms McCrossin concludes.



It has been nearly 10 years since Ms McCrossin's initial diagnosis and successful treatment in 2013.

LGBTQI+ People and Cancer: A guide for people with cancer, their families and friends will be launched during Sydney World Pride 2023 at Cancer Council's stand at [Mardi Gras Fair Day](#) in Sydney this Sunday. The information booklet is also available online at cancercouncil.com.au/lgbtqi

If you, or anyone you know has any questions about cancer, call Cancer Council on 13 11 20

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About Cancer Council:

Cancer Council is standing by everyone living with cancer, protecting life's moments, for life. This is only possible thanks to the incredible generosity of our volunteers, supporters and employees. Together, we work across every area of cancer, supporting communities where and when it's most needed.