

A Research Agenda for Fear of Cancer Recurrence: A Delphi Study Conducted in Australia

Butow et al. (2019)
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For which topic were research priorities identified?

fear of cancer recurrence

In which location was the research priority setting conducted?

Australia - Australia

Why was it conducted at all?

Fear of cancer recurrence (FCR) is common, debilitating, and costly to the health system. While there has been a rising trajectory in FCR-related research, there remain many unanswered questions. A research agenda is required to clarify priorities and ensure that research dollars and effort are expended wisely.

What was the objective?

to elicit research topics and priorities from clinical and academic experts in fear of cancer recurrence

What was the outcome?

a ranking list of 5 research areas

How long did the research prioritization take?

No information provided.

Which methods were used to identify research priorities?

Delphi; focus group; survey

How were the priorities for research identified exactly?

Step 1: survey: participants were asked to nominate their top three priorities for FCR research (in order of importance and in light of current research/practice), 34 topics were submitted. Step 2: data processing: content analysis, weighing and ranking. Step 3: focus groups: to discuss and generate FCR research priorities, additional 13 research topics were identified. Step 4: Delphi survey with 2 rounds: round 1: participants were asked to rate the importance of the 27 research priorities, round 2: participants were asked to re-rate importance

Which stakeholders took part?

Australian psychosocial researchers and clinicians and cancer survivors. Survey: 23 participants: 15 psychologists, 3 psychiatrists, 1 social worker, 2 oncologists, 1 public health researcher, and 1 statistician. Focus group: 28 participants: 26 FCR research-active PoCoG members and 2 cancer survivors. Delphi round 1: 31 participants. Delphi round 2: 23 participants.

How were stakeholders recruited?

Survey: A call went out to all PoCoG members in February 2018 to join an interest group to pursue research in FCR. 5 members responded. The project team invited all members of this newly formed FCR Interest Group to complete a survey eliciting research priorities. Focus group: PoCoG subsequently purposively selected 26 FCR research-active PoCoG members plus two cancer survivors to participate. Delphi: Eligible Australian experts in FCR research were identified through the PoCoG FCR Interest Group and via snowballing (where participants provide names of other potentially eligible participants in an expanding web of contact and inquiry).

Were stakeholders actively involved or did they just participate?

Stakeholders were mere participants of the research prioritization process; they were not actively involved in the process.