

Defining Research Priorities in Complementary Medicine in Oncology

Robotin et al. (2012)

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For which topic were research priorities identified?

complementary medicine in oncology

In which location was the research priority setting conducted?

Australia - Australia

Why was it conducted at all?

The high usage of complementary and alternative medicines (CAM) by cancer patients is increasing, despite limited research available to support their use. Therefore identifying research priorities that can inform the evidence base for CAM treatment is relevant for many stakeholders, including funders, researchers and consumers.

What was the objective?

to local complementary medicine research priorities that can translate into improved health outcomes for patients with a cancer diagnosis in Australia

What was the outcome?

a ranking list of 10 research topics

How long did the research prioritization take?

September 2009 - October 2009

Which methods were used to identify research priorities?

Delphi

How were the priorities for research identified exactly?

Step 1: round 1a: participants invited to list their top 5 priorities for CAM research in cancer considering strength of evidence attached to specific therapies, 122 propositions made. Step 2: data processing: responses sorted, tabulated, categorized into 20 categories. Step 3: round 1b: participants were asked to rank categories in order of priority, the five lowest scoring categories eliminated. Step 4: Delphi round 2: participants were asked to chose their top 20 out of 1010 propositions and rate them for their potential usefulness for cancer care. Step 5: Delphi round 3: list of 14 recommendations, participants were asked to consider which propositions had the greatest potential of influencing cancer care in an Australian context by ranking them. Step 6: consolidated list circulated to all participants for comment and to confirm final list

Which stakeholders took part?

Integrative medicine experts, oncologists with interest in cam research, consumer representatives and cam practitioners and researchers. Delphi round 1: 26 participants. Delphi round 2: 18 participants. Delphi round 3: 19 participants.

How were stakeholders recruited?

Stakeholder groups were identified based upon different groups' interest or involvement in CAM and cancer research and practice. To ensure equal input into the process, the project team invited equal representation of all stakeholder groups in the consensus building process. The project team invited participation from CAM practitioners with at least five years' work experience, accredited by relevant professional organizations and having a special interest in cancer research and/or management. The project team defined consumer representatives as members of a committee or a steering group who voice the consumer perspective and take part in the decision making process on behalf of consumers.

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.