

Locked down in Victoria – How the ACCESS Project has helped to address unmet needs during the pandemic

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The Context...

Equitable access to supportive care is a long-standing issue, compounded by the ongoing impacts of COVID19. As one of the most locked down jurisdictions in the world, we heard that supportive care screening and referrals were challenged in Victoria, with underserved groups experiencing greatest disadvantage.

Funded by the Victorian Department of Health, Cancer Council Victoria is delivering the **Accessing Cancer Care Equitably using Support Services (ACCESS) project** which aims to improve access to supportive care through real-time, health-professional initiated online referrals to our nurse-led 13 11 20 Information and Support line.

About the Project...

Phase 1: October 2021 – December 2022
Focus: Improving access to supportive care services for Rural and Regional Victorians

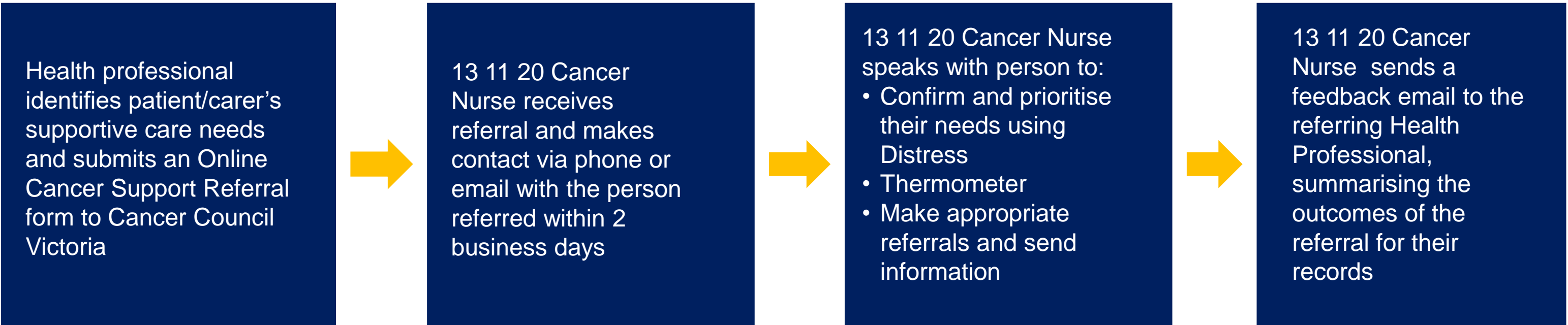
AIMS:

- 1. Increase the number of connections to our 13 11 20 Information and Support line
- 2. Increase referrals to our counselling services
- 3. Increase referrals to our financial counselling service

Methods:

- Education Webinars delivered to key oncology health professionals across rural and regional Health Services to improve awareness and understanding of Cancer Council services
- Promotional media campaigns delivered in rural and regional Victoria to increase visibility and awareness of Cancer Council Victoria
- Promotion of our online Health Professional referral form including the feedback loop

The online referral pathway...



The Results...

- **19 webinars delivered to 48 participating health services** to upskill health service and promote the online referral pathway
- **17% increase in connections to 13 11 20** from 2021 (8,431) to 2022 (9,826)
- **197% increase in online cancer support referrals** from 2021 (242) to 2022 (719)

Figure 1 Online Referrals Metro v Rural & Regional

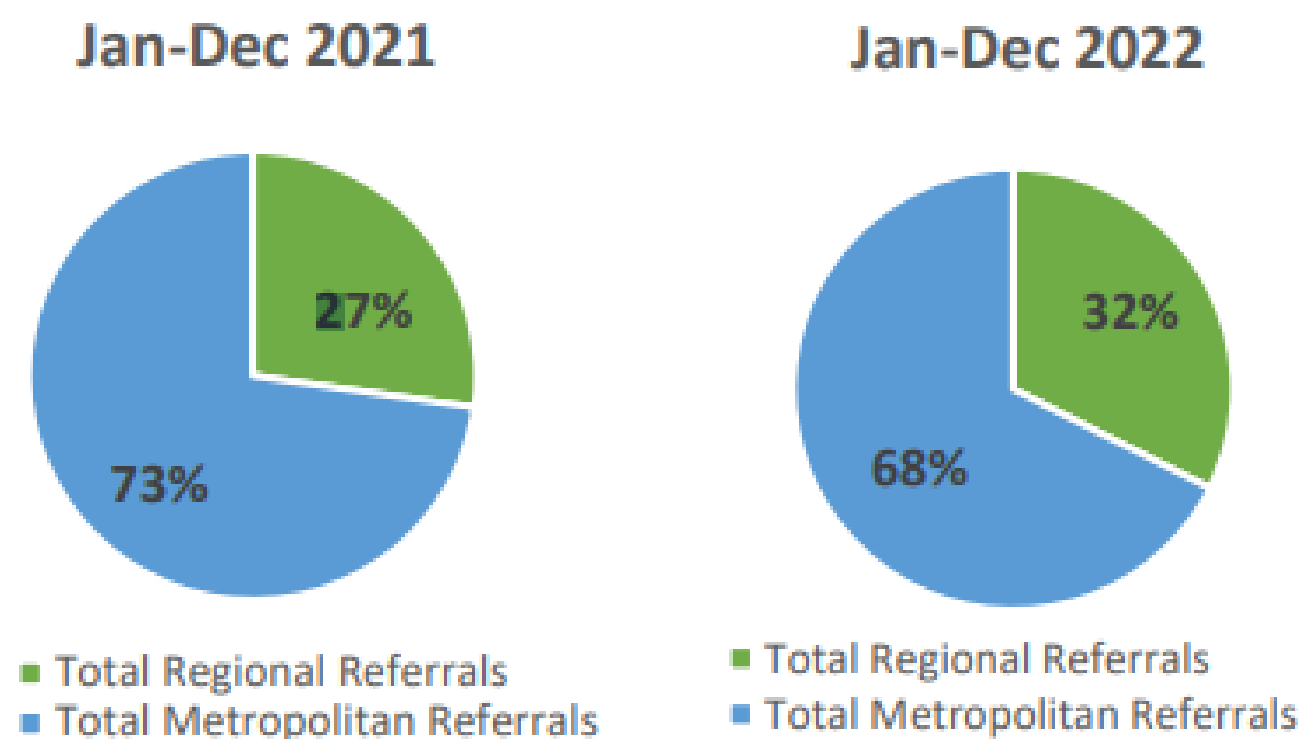


Figure 2 Counselling Referrals Metro v Rural & Regional

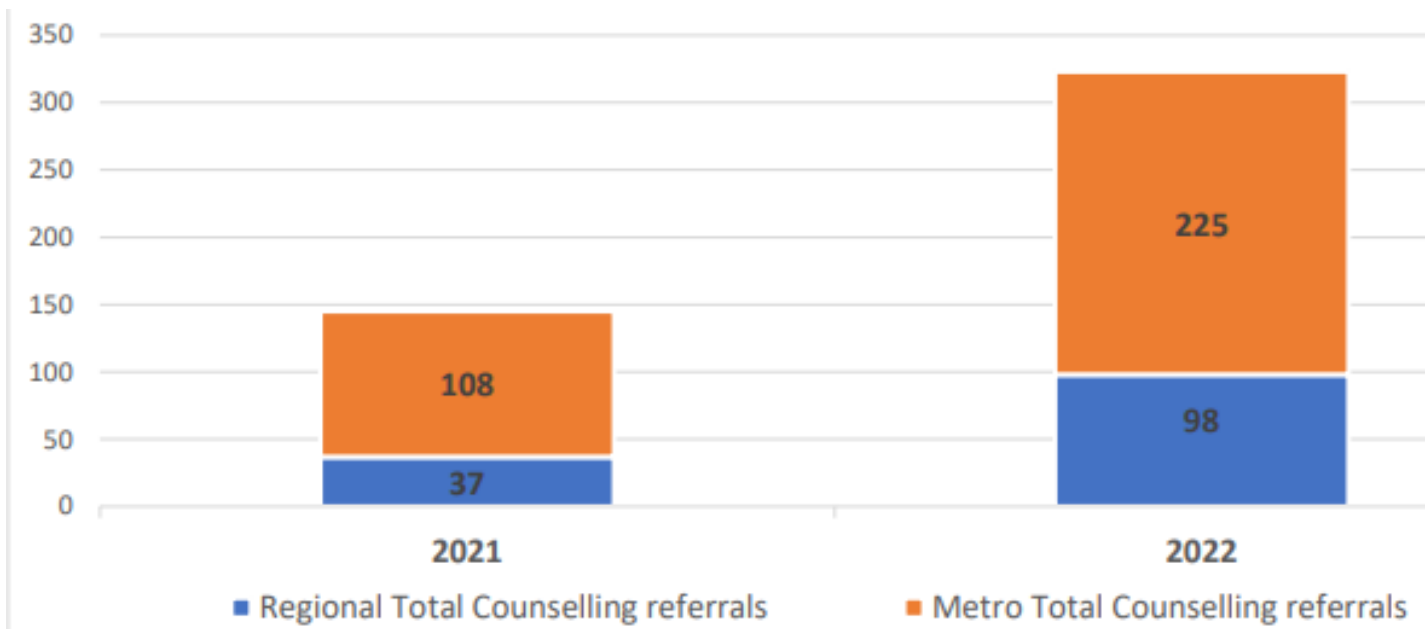
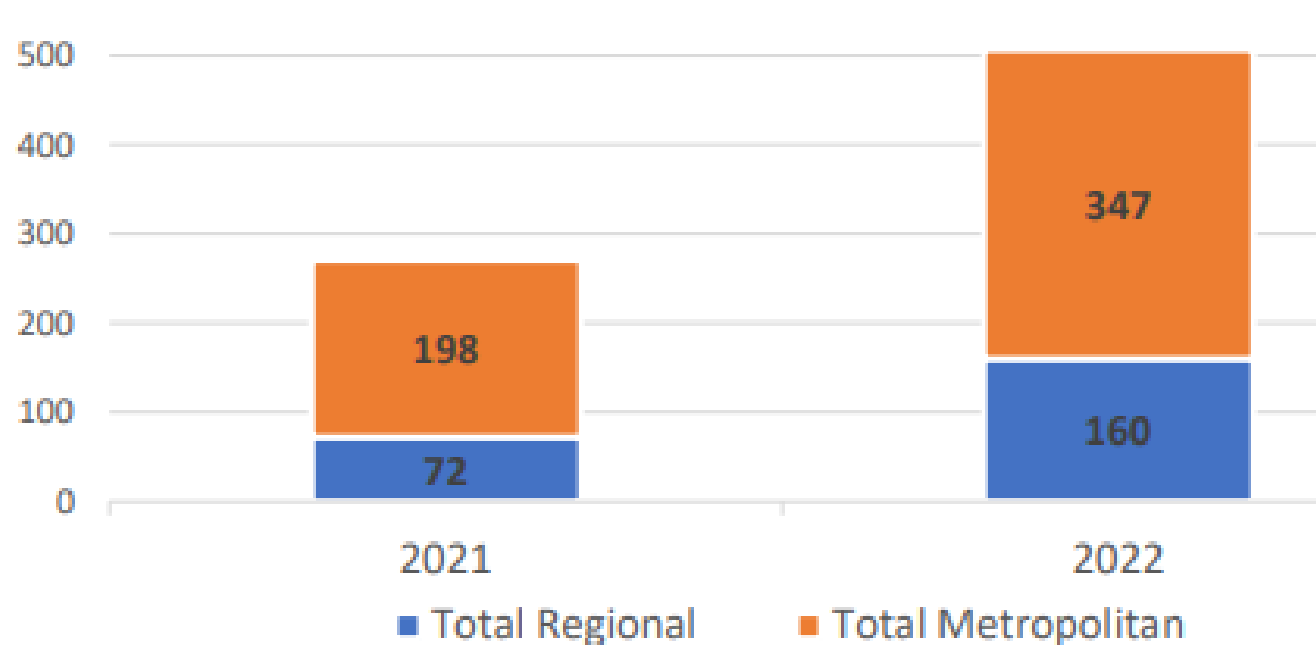


Figure 3 Financial Counselling Referrals Metro v Rural & Regional



Reflections on Phase 1...

- Focused education and engagement with Health Professionals can facilitate increased access to and uptake of Supportive Care services for those that otherwise may not access it
- Engagement with Health Professionals and public education campaigns need to be ongoing, and via a range of mediums to sustain service uptake and imbed use of the online referral form into practice

What's next?

- Phase 2 of the ACCESS project commenced in January 2022 and will run until June 2024
- This phase will focus on:
 - continued engagement with Health Professionals involved in the project
 - Ongoing tailored education and support for health services to continue embedding the referral pathway into routine care
 - Improving access to supportive care services for those who speak a language other than English

The ACCESS Project is supported by the Victorian Government