

Equitable Access to Supportive Cancer Care: The Cornerstone of the Australian Cancer Plan

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INTRODUCTION

The Australian Cancer Plan (the Plan) presents a once in a generation opportunity for equitable cancer control reform. The Plan, which includes national priorities covering the entire cancer care continuum, aims to make the vision of world-class cancer outcomes and experiences a reality for all Australians over the next ten years.

METHODS

Broad and tailored stakeholder engagement informed the 10-year ambition statements, 2- and 5- goals, and actions in this bold new plan (Figures 1 and 2). People affected by cancer, including those representing ten priority population groups, were consulted with.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Feedback was received via consultations and public submissions from more than 400 groups and 300 individuals (see Figure 1).

At 5-years, the Australian Cancer Plan aims to improve equitable access to evidence-based, innovative models of integrated multidisciplinary care across the cancer continuum.

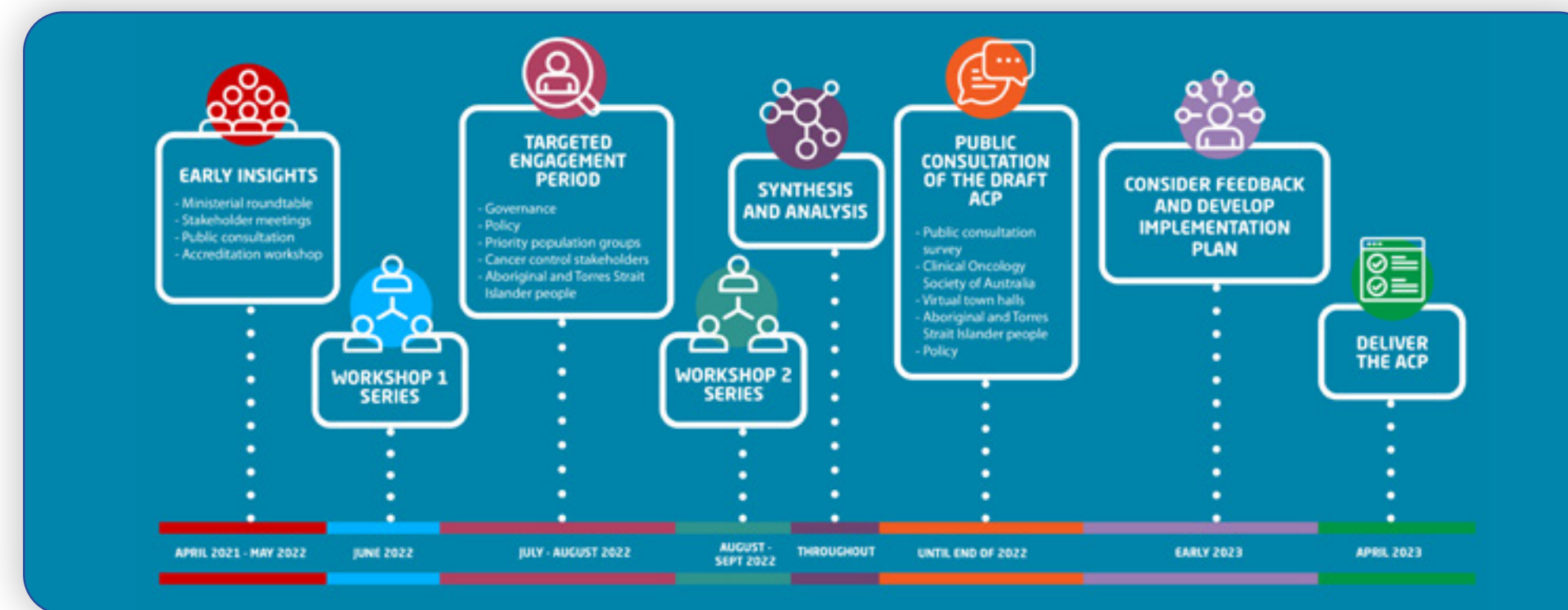


Figure 1. Timeline for the development of the Australian Cancer Plan. Comprehensive consultation and engagement with external stakeholders was integral to the development of the Plan.

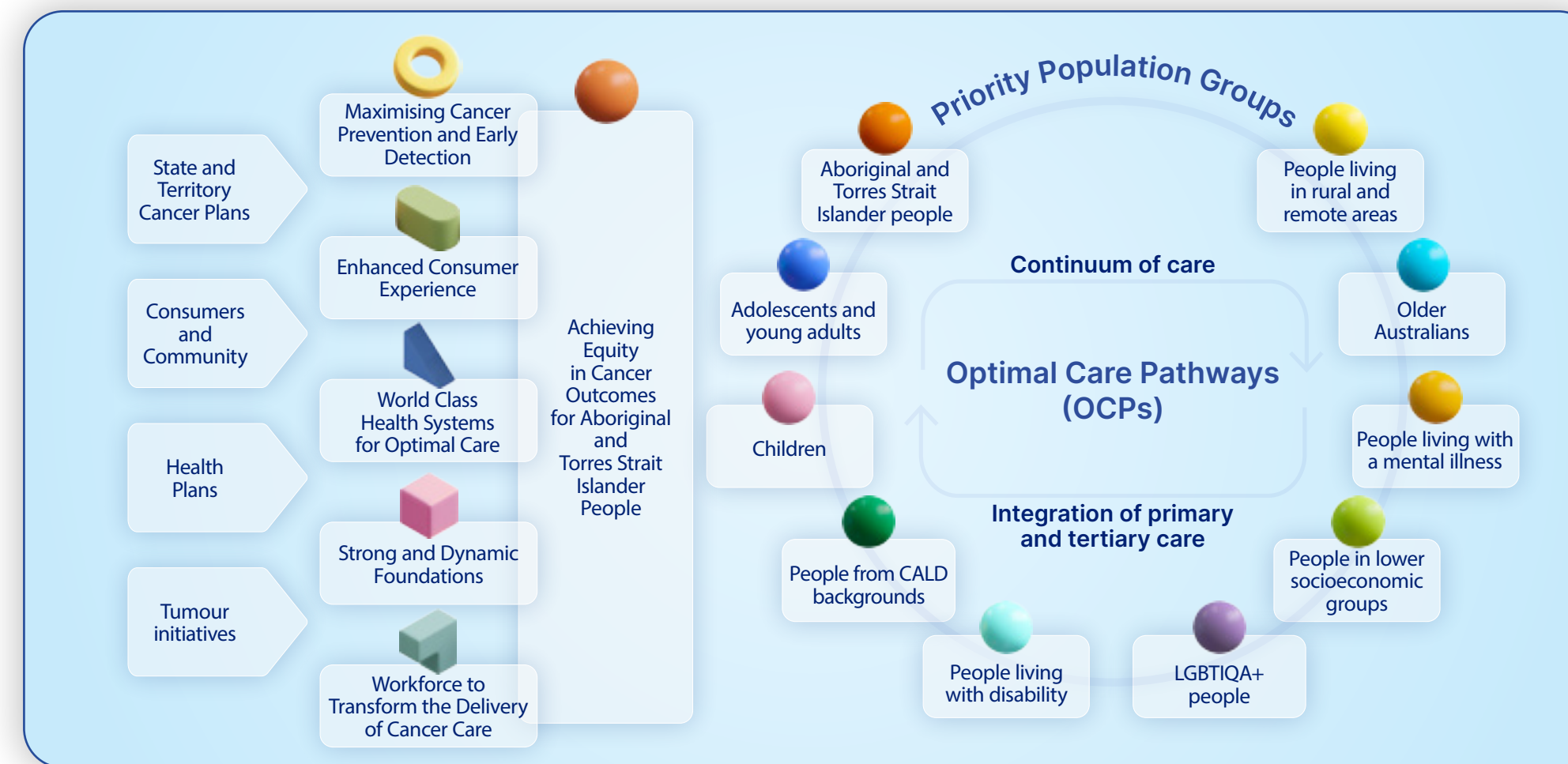


Figure 2. Australian Cancer Plan Conceptual Framework. The Plan sets six Strategic Objectives where national focus and effort are required to deliver better outcomes for the next decade and beyond, it is informed by the needs of ten priority population groups and acknowledges and builds on existing initiatives.

Stakeholders identified access to supportive care as a priority. 18 (39%) of the 46 actions in the Plan are supportive-care specific. These actions span the six strategic objectives.

The Plan will enhance consumer experiences and supportive care across the cancer journey from diagnosis through treatment, underpinned by information and support. People affected by cancer will be empowered, respected and involved in their own care, reducing stigma and discrimination for equitable cancer outcomes (see Figure 3). Supportive care models offering culturally responsive supportive care, emotional and practical support will reduce the burden of cancer treatment on people affected by cancer.

CONCLUSIONS

Equitable, personalised and accessible models of supportive care, reflecting the unique cultural, social, psychological, physical and financial needs of priority population groups, form the centrepiece of the Plan.

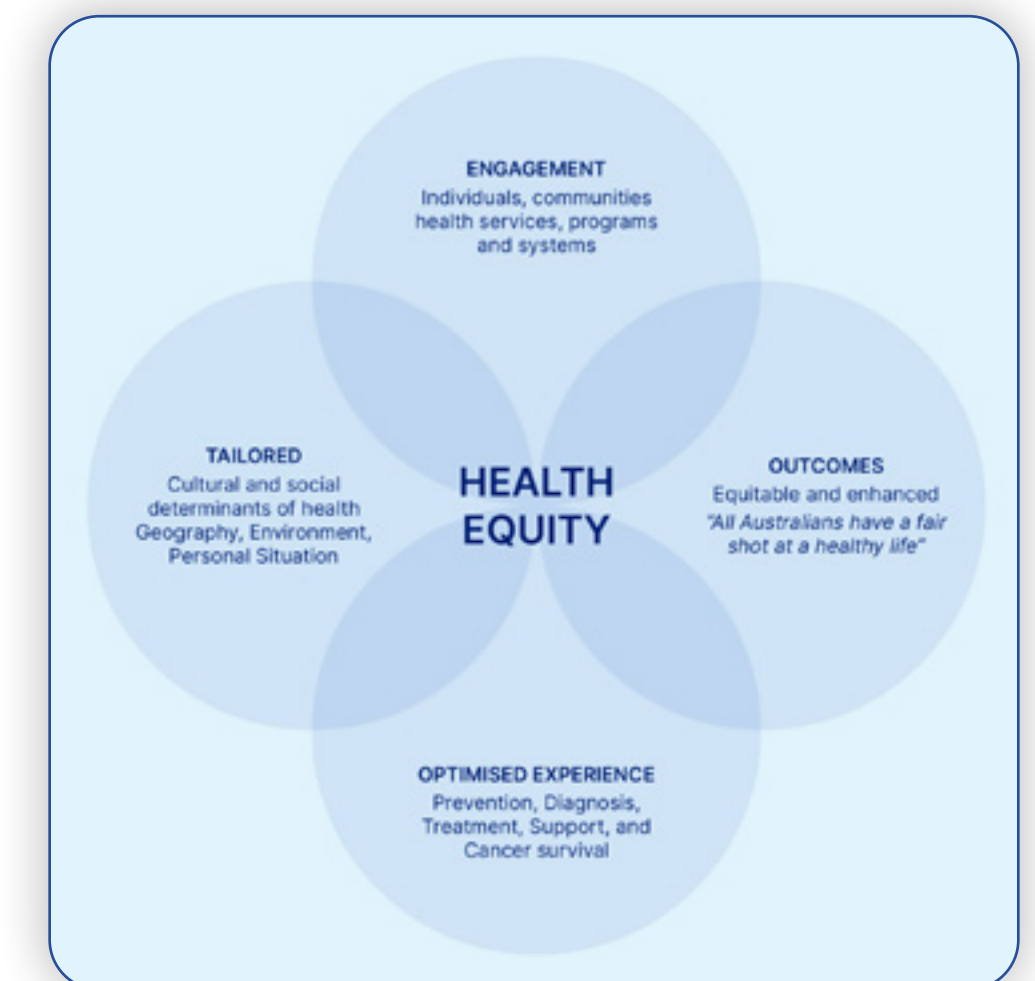


Figure 3. Australian Cancer Plan Framework for Health Equity in Cancer Outcomes. Empowering individuals, responding to social and cultural determinants of health impacting on access to supportive care, facilitating health services, health systems, programs and communities to respond for equitable cancer outcomes and experiences for all Australians.



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