

MANAGING THE PSYCHOSOCIAL BURDEN OF ADVANCED CANCER IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Background

- Advanced cancer is a life-limiting disease, associated with r psychosocial burden, lower quality of life, and high unmet needs [1, 2,].
- limited research on the relationship between services available to people with advanced cancer and their unmet needs and psychosocial outcomes.**

Research Questions & Methods

This was a **sequential explanatory** mixed methods study.

1. What is the perceived need for psychosocial support by people with advanced solid tumour cancers in Western Australia, and what types of support do they access?

Study A: Qualitative study
Participants: 24 people with advanced (stage IV/ non-curable) solid tumour cancers
Methods: Reflexive thematic analysis of in-depth, semi-structured interviews

2. How do people with advanced solid tumour cancers engage with psychosocial support?

Study B: Quantitative study
Participants: 17 caregivers
Methods: Descriptive analysis of cross-sectional study

3. What is the cost of accessing care for people with advanced cancer?

Study C: Quantitative study
Participants: 70 patient-carer dyads. Patients receiving treatment for high grade glioma
Methods: Cost analysis

Key Findings

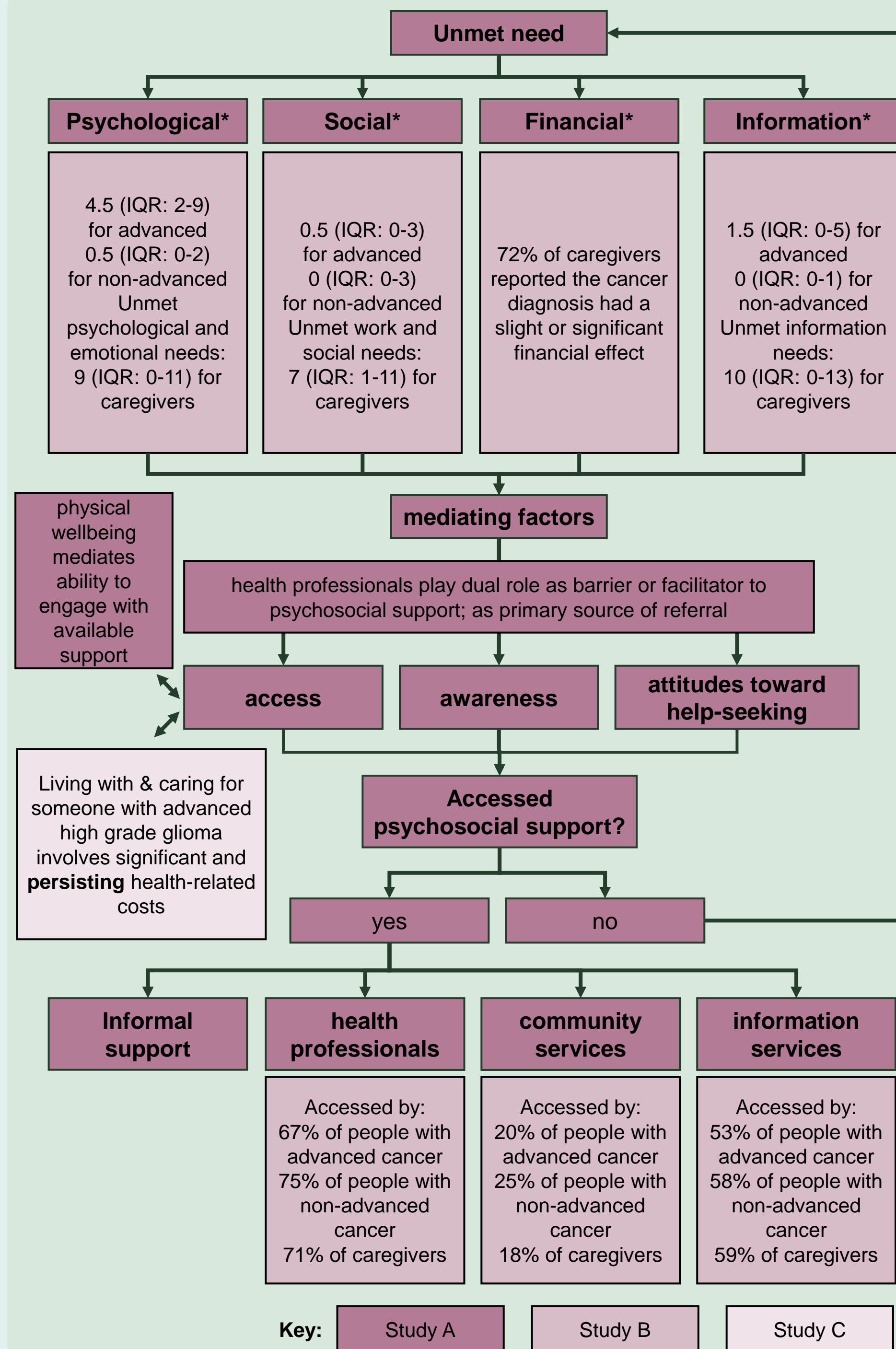


Figure 1. Model integrating findings from studies A, B and C to illustrate psychosocial support service use, and factors that affect access and use, for people with advanced cancer and their caregivers.

*Unmet needs measured using Supportive Care Needs Survey and Supportive Care Needs Survey for Partners and Caregivers. IQR = Interquartile range.

Conclusion

- Living with an advanced cancer diagnosis has wide-ranging physical, emotional, financial, and information-related implications for people with advanced cancer and their caregivers.
- Whilst there are existing supportive care services provided by health professionals and community organisations,

not all people with advanced cancer and their caregivers are aware of or use existing services that could help meet their needs.

Recommendations

The findings from this research highlight the need to:

- improve continuity of care**, through work that **strengthens collaboration** within and between hospital and community-based support.
- This could include **education campaigns**, further support for cancer nurse coordinators and/ or patient navigators.
- Development of outreach services to **increase the accessibility** of existing services.
- Recognition of carers' unmet needs** and increased awareness of available support services to meet their needs.

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