

## POSTER ABSTRACT

### **A new way to talk about cancer – trialing a Cancer Pop up shop in Melbourne’s West**

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**Background:** In 2018, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) funded North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) to trial an innovative “Let’s talk about cancer” pop up shop.

The aims were to promote the importance of early diagnosis and screening, improve awareness of common signs and symptoms of cancer, deliver positive health messages, reduce stigma and to test the acceptability of the model.

**Methods:** A partnership was formed with Western Health, Cancer Council Victoria and IPC Health, who provided oncology and public health nurses, volunteers and cancer resources to the shop.

Short-term leases were taken in Sunshine and Caroline Springs shopping centres to run 4-week pop up shops in February and June 2018.

The model provided information, advice and referral from specialist oncology nurses, but not diagnosis or treatment. Volunteers welcomed visitors and helped direct flow to nurses and available resources. The volunteer pool spoke 12 languages other than English.

A mixed-method evaluation explored shop operation, health service referrals and impact on visitors through feedback and nurse consultation notes.

**Results:** Over 412 oncology nurse conversations were recorded during 39 days of operation and 794 public-volunteer interactions were recorded in the second shop over 19 days. Participants were culturally diverse.

The most commonly discussed topics were cancer screening, signs and symptoms of cancer, treatment, side-effects, family cancer, grief and reducing cancer risk. Of 67 participants interviewed, 78.8% indicated they would take action; 36% said they would make at least one lifestyle change; 30% said they would talk to family or friends about cancer; and 23% would engage in screening activity.

Nurses believed that many visitors would not otherwise have sought or understood cancer information.

**Conclusions:** The Let’s Talk About Cancer shops were a successful method of reaching and supporting an ethnically diverse population and encouraging screening, lifestyle changes, preventative action and referral to health professionals.