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Early Intervention Exercise and Nutritional Education Shows Promising Results in Cancer Survivorship in the Life Insurance Industry.

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Abstract:

Best practice guidelines recommend that people living with cancer be referred for exercise and nutritional support early in their diagnosis. Yet only 15% access structured exercise programs, and within the Life Insurance industry the average delay is 15 months. To address this gap, we partnered with two leading Australian Life Insurers to deliver a collaborative cancer care program, providing earlier intervention and improved outcomes for those undergoing active treatment.

Method: Customers were screened within 0–60 days of claim lodgement to enable rapid access. Approval was sought from each participant's GP or Oncologist, with exclusion criteria applied and consents obtained. The program comprised of six supervised exercise sessions and three telehealth nutrition consultations over 12 weeks. Participants also received individualised Survivorship Care Plans and tailored educational resources. Outcomes were measured using FACT COG, Fatigue Severity Scale, Distress Thermometer, and SF 36.

Results: Twenty nine customers commenced the program, with a 79% completion rate. At baseline, 91% demonstrated no capacity for work, reduced to 41% at completion. Overall capacity increased from 9% to 59%, with weekly work hours rising from 1.2 to 9.5. Participants reported a 10% improvement in cognitive functioning (FACT COG), distress scores decreased from 4.1/10 to 2.5/10, and fatigue severity reduced by 8 points. SF 36 outcomes showed gains in physical functioning (54% → 76%), social functioning (58% → 77%), general health (43% → 55%), and emotional health (63% → 83%).

Discussion: These findings highlight the impact of early, multidisciplinary intervention combining exercise and nutrition. The program enhanced recovery, functional capacity, and readiness for return to work, underscoring the vital role of integrated survivorship care in cancer treatment pathways.

Keywords

Early Intervention, Survivorship, Innovation, Exercise Oncology

Conflict of Interest & Ethical Approval

yes

Abstract submitters declaration

yes

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