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## “It all comes down to relationships and money, which it shouldn’t, but that’s healthcare”: Exploring funding models and funding-related barriers and facilitators to exercise oncology

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**Category:** Behavioral Science/Implementation

**Background:** Despite strong evidence for exercise in cancer care, routine implementation remains a challenge. Closing the research-to-practice gap requires a multifaceted approach across all levels of the health-care system. One key priority is to ensure exercise services are affordable and sustainable, which need to be supported by appropriate funding models and policies. However, little is known about how existing funding models support exercise oncology or the barriers and facilitators that affect them within Australia.

**Methods:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with people living with or beyond cancer and providers delivering exercise oncology services (i.e. exercise physiologists) in Queensland, Australia. Interviews explored financial aspects of accessing and delivering exercise oncology services. For people living with or beyond cancer, topics included costs paid for exercise oncology services, use of funding supports, and cost-related factors influencing service uptake. For exercise physiologists, topics included billing practices, balancing affordability with service sustainability, and financial facilitators and barriers to provide exercise oncology services. Interviews were analysed using template thematic analysis.

**Results:** Fourteen participants completed interviews (n=9 people living with or beyond cancer, n=5 exercise physiologists). Coding and theme generation are ongoing until January 2026; complete results of the study will be presented.

**Conclusions:** Calls to action are valuable, but they are only meaningful if people living with or beyond cancer can afford exercise services and exercise oncology providers can sustainably deliver them. These outcomes are only possible when health funders and systems routinely and adequately support the cost of exercise oncology. This study will highlight how exercise services are funded and the financial and practical factors that influence both financial access to and delivery of exercise services. Findings can inform policy, guide resource allocation, and support sustainable, equitable models of care that integrate exercise into routine cancer care.

### Keywords

Implementation, funding, policy, access

### Conflict of Interest & Ethical Approval

yes

### Abstract submitters declaration

yes

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