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**‘Patient satisfaction in the
ambulatory oncology setting:
Are patients’ needs being met?’
A Descriptive Study**

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Signed Statement

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the School Library, being available for loan and photocopying.

Deborah Hoberg
10/07/2011

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Abstract

Background: Cancer is a leading cause of death in Australia. Its increasing incidence and prevalence predicts that by age 85 one in two Australians will face a cancer diagnosis. Improved diagnostics and treatment advances now mean that many more Australians are living with cancer and recent drug and technological advances have allowed the move from a predominantly inpatient setting to that of outpatient clinics and day centres.

Purpose: The study aimed to examine patient satisfaction in a single institution outpatient oncology centre with the primary aim of recording baseline data. Data collected from the study will be used to identify any areas of unmet needs and to identify areas requiring further improvement or development as well as to evaluate future initiatives with the primary aim of building a service that is better aligned to patient needs and therefore increases patient satisfaction.

Methods: A modified version of the EORTC-INPATSAT32 with 8 additional questions was administered to 168 adult oncology patients who attended a single institution cancer centre for either intravenous chemotherapy or routine follow up during active treatment. All participants were provided with a participant information sheet outlining the aim and purpose of the study and consent was implied by completion of the questionnaire.

Results: One hundred and sixty eight participants took part in the study reporting mean satisfaction scores for all 14 aspects of care above 85. Scores were compared with previously determined acceptable levels adopted from surveys undertaken with inpatients in Western Australia and South Australia and showed wait time, exchange of information between caregivers and nurses availability and information provision to be areas requiring improvement. Age, gender, primary diagnosis, length of time as patient and treatment route were not found to predict satisfaction. The most common issues commented upon in the free text section related favourably to staff and unfavourably to the suggested introduction of paid parking.

Conclusions: Overall satisfaction rates were quite high. Low scoring areas were identified as areas requiring improvement however it appears that the tool may not be sensitive enough for quality improvement purposes due to its limitations. Areas requiring further research have been identified.