

# How Cancer Council Liaisons make a difference

*Enhancing access to supportive care services  
for people affected by cancer*

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## Introduction

Timely identification and referral of individuals with unmet supportive care needs can improve quality of life and reduce the adverse effects of cancer and treatment. To improve access to information and support services, Cancer Council NSW established the Cancer Council Liaison (CCL) service. CCLs are based in cancer centres and work alongside the treatment team to support people affected by cancer.

## Aims

The aim of the study was to assess the quality of clients' experiences with the CCL service and explore perceptions of the service amongst healthcare professionals (HCPs).

## Methods

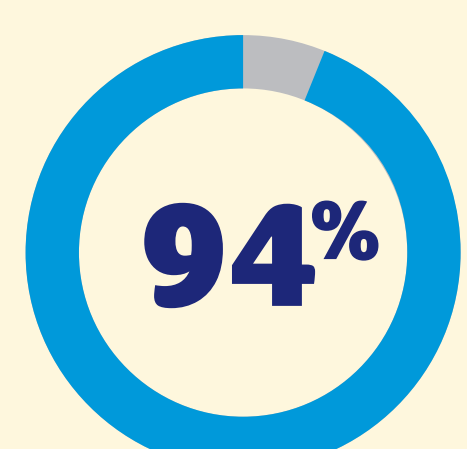
The findings presented are part of a broader mixed-method evaluation of the service. Electronic and printed anonymous surveys were completed by clients from three cancer centres following interaction with CCLs. Quantitative data were analysed descriptively, free-text comments were coded and analysed qualitatively. Semi-structured interviews with HCPs were undertaken in four cancer centres with CCLs. Interview transcripts were transcribed, coded and analysed thematically using NVivo.

## Results

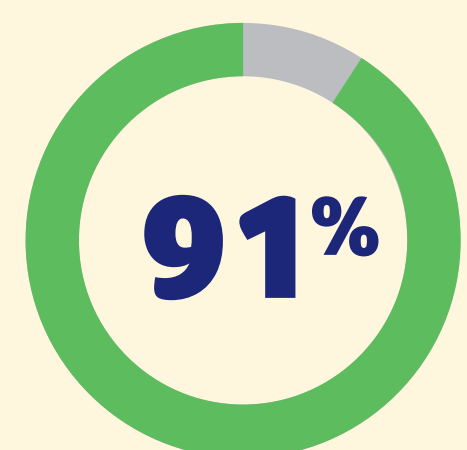
**47**  
CLIENTS  
COMPLETED  
THE SURVEY



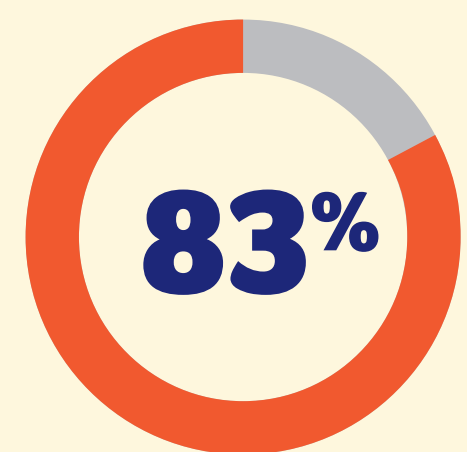
**CLIENTS AFTER INTERACTING WITH THE  
CANCER COUNCIL LIAISON**



of survey respondents reported increased awareness of support available and how to access it



of survey respondents reported decreased stress



of survey respondents reported their individual needs were met



Survey respondents reported a mean rating of 4.9 out of 5 stars regarding their experience with the CCL.

*"Prior to this position, and prior to patients having access to this position, they weren't always aware of what really was available to them. So now having the Liaison, it's a very clear and easy referral pathway for our clinical staff to direct patients through and I believe it's also self-referral as well, so just an invaluable resource."* – HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

**20**  
HCPs  
INTERVIEWED



**AFTER INTERACTING WITH THE CANCER COUNCIL  
LIAISON, HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS REPORTED**



improved access to supportive care for patients and families



timely detection of unmet needs



increased HCPs awareness of available support services

**HCPs VIEWED THE CCL SERVICE AS UNIQUE,  
INNOVATIVE AND AN "EXTENDED PART OF THE  
CANCER CARE TEAM"**



All participants stated they would recommend the CCL role to other cancer centres

## Conclusions

Findings demonstrate the high quality of clients' and HCPs experiences with the CCL service and highlight the value of the CCL service in cancer centres. Further research is required to determine the impact of the CCL service on client quality of life and health outcomes.

