

Question checklist for cancer care and your rights

Asking your doctor questions will help you make an informed choice. You may want to include some of the questions below in your own list.

Choosing a specialist

- Have you treated a lot of people with this type of cancer?
 - Do you practise in the public or private system, or both?
 - Do you specialise in treating this type of cancer? If not, could you recommend someone who does?
 - Do you work in a multidisciplinary team? Who else is in the team?
 - I'm thinking of getting a second opinion. Can you recommend anyone?
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Treatment choice, side effects and informed consent

- What are my treatment options? What is the aim of each treatment?
 - What treatment do you recommend? What is the expected outcome?
 - Are there other treatments that you aren't recommending? Why?
 - What should I expect if I don't have treatment?
 - How long will treatment take? Will I have to stay in hospital?
 - If this particular treatment does not work, are there other options?
 - What is the likely success rate of any surgery or treatment?
 - What are the risks and possible side effects of each treatment?
 - What is the chance that these complications or side effects will occur?
 - What will be done to prevent these side effects?
 - Are the side effects immediate, temporary or long-lasting?
 - What follow-up care can I expect after treatment?
 - Will I need to take medicines long-term after treatment?
 - What is advance care planning? Who can help me with this?
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Financial impacts and complaints

- Are there any out-of-pocket costs not covered by Medicare or my private health cover?
 - Can the cost be reduced if I can't afford it?
 - Will I be able to work while having treatment?
 - Who can I talk to if I have concerns about my care?
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My questions
