

Designing a regional approach to chemotherapy services

By Thick

For Grampians Integrated Cancer Services, Ballarat, Victoria

Overview

An ageing population has put pressure on chemotherapy services in the Grampians region in rural Australia. Rising cancer rates have resulted in growing demand for the only clinician in the region. Some of these patients have faced the dilemma of waiting for treatment or traveling many hours from home to receive treatment.

Efforts to attract and retain another clinician to provide specialist services had proven unsuccessful and the need for a new approach was recognised. Representatives from public and private health providers were brought together to design a new service model to meet existing and future chemotherapy demand.

Process

Thick and Foresight Lane partnered on this project to facilitate key stakeholders through a design process. A sponsor group was formed with representatives from the different organisations with a stake in the outcome. The codesign event was itself 'co-designed' with the stakeholders; this gave them clarity about their shared goal and meant they arrived ready and prepared to engage in the process.

The benefits of design

Our design process was able to successfully support collaboration across organisational boundaries for the benefit of cancer patients. The use of co-design models and frameworks enabled collaboration around a shared goal, to the level of detail and clarity that the idea built into a business model and implemented.

Effect

There is now another option for patients in the Grampians region to access treatment. The pressure on the current chemotherapy service has been relieved and cancer services in the area are better able to meet current and future demand. Furthermore, the event participants have gone on to raise \$1.5 million from the community and government for a new cancer treatment facility in the region.