



Newsletter/Network News article

Approximately 75% of Australian women with ovarian cancer are diagnosed at an advanced stage – the harrowing statistic that Victorian Primary Health Networks are aiming to help change with the launch of the new ovarian cancer pages on [HealthPathways/SEMPHN online care pathways].

In 2020, approximately 1,600 Australian women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer. GPs may not see many cases of ovarian cancer per year, so easy access to agreed and consistent guidelines, and knowing who and where to refer patients in one place is crucial to a patient's cancer journey.

Aligned with the nationally recognised and endorsed Optimal Care Pathway, the ovarian cancer pathways provide guidance and resources on how to identify and act on the early signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer.

Written by GPs for GPs, in collaboration with specialists, the pathways are considerate of the realities of a busy general practice, as well as local policy and procedures. GPs and their practice staff can be confident that the pathways are fit-for-purpose and evidence informed.

This February is ovarian cancer awareness month. We encourage GPs to check out the ovarian cancer [HealthPathways/online care pathways] to identify and support patients with suspected or established cancer in the community. Specifically, the pathways cover off Ovarian Cysts, Ovarian Cancer Follow-up and Ovarian Cancer – Established.

[To access HealthPathways, get in touch with your local PHN]
[Explore the online care pathways here]

For more information on the OCP HealthPathways project, visit the VTPHNA website:
<https://vtphna.org.au/our-work/best-practice-prevention-management-and-support/optimal-care-pathways/>

Case study for GP newsletters

How can the Ovarian Cancer HealthPathway pages help me manage my patients?

Emily, is a 58-year-old postmenopausal female who visits complaining of abdominal pain, bloating, and feeling full quickly for the past six weeks. She also has frequent problems with indigestion, and states that she is unusually napping during the days. Emily is also experiencing increased urinary urgency and frequency on a persistent basis.

The GP suspects an ovarian cancer or other significant intra-abdominal pathology and consults the relevant [HealthPathways page](#) to verify their suspicions and the appropriate management approach. An ultrasound of abdomen and pelvis is completed where a large complex cyst is found. Following the discovery of the cyst a CA-125 is completed.

The results of Emily's CA-125 come back and confirm her risk of malignancy to be high. The GP informs Emily of her results and seeks consent to refer her to a gynaecological oncologist (GYN-ONC).

The GYN-ONC recommends surgery to remove the ovary, which confirms an ovarian malignancy and subsequently, Emily undergoes chemotherapy.



Shocked by the diagnosis, Emily returns to her GP where she is provided with the “What to expect – Ovarian Cancer” and the helpline information for Ovarian Cancer Australia, to access a support group. These resources were located under the patient resource section on the [Ovarian Cancer – Established pathway](#).

After discharge from oncology services, around five years following active treatment, Emily’s GYN-ONC provides her GP with a cancer treatment summary letter, as per the OCP HealthPathway page, which outlines the proposed protocol for follow-up reviews. As per the Ovarian Cancer Follow-up pathway, the general practice schedules reminder and recalls for six months, and then annually thereafter.

Emily’s GP will focus on relapse prevention, including any medication, provision of psychosocial support, and management of any persisting physical symptoms, as per the [Ovarian Cancer Follow-Up HealthPathway page](#).



Social media messages & schedule

Channel	Suggested Dates	Message
Facebook & LinkedIn	4 February 2020 (World Cancer Day)	Today marks World Cancer Day – a day to remember and rally behind the millions of lives that cancer affects. The Victorian PHNs have released seven HealthPathways aligned with the Optimal Cancer Care Pathways to provide GPs with guidance on managing and supporting patients with cancer and their loved ones. Check out our [HealthPathways/online care pathways] today for the best-practice guidance for your patients.
	Second week of February	Persistent bloating. Abdominal pain. A loss of appetite. Collectively, these three symptoms could all be signs of suspected ovarian cancer. Head to our new ovarian cancer [HealthPathways/online care pathways] today to learn about the early signs and symptoms in your patients. [insert HealthPathways/online care pathways link]
	Fourth week of February	Approximately 75% of Australian women with ovarian cancer are diagnosed at an advanced stage. [HealthPathways/online care pathways] are aiming to improve early detection and referral of patients with suspected cancer through the launch of the new ovarian cancer pages. Explore them today [insert HealthPathways/online care pathways link]
	26 February 2020 (Teal Ribbon Day)	Today marks Teal Ribbon Day – raising awareness of ovarian cancer. Approximately 1,600 Australians will be diagnosed this year with ovarian cancer. The Victorian PHNs have recently published a suite of clinical and referral pathways for general practice that aim to improve early detection, referral and follow up management of women with suspected or established ovarian cancer.
	First week of March	Mutated BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes are involved in most cases of hereditary ovarian cancer. [HealthPathways/online care pathways] can help you refer your patient on for genetic testing. Head to the familial ovarian cancer syndrome page today [insert HealthPathways/online care pathways link]
	Third week of March	Around 3 in every 100 women with cancer has ovarian cancer. Managing symptoms and side effects of treatment can be difficult. [HealthPathways/online care pathways] offers guidance to GPs in the management of patients with ovarian cancer. Explore the ovarian cancer pages today [insert HealthPathways/online care pathways link]
Twitter	4 February 2020 (World Cancer Day)	Today marks @UICC World Cancer Day. Victorian PHNs released seven HealthPathways aligned with Optimal Cancer Care Pathways to help guide GPs on managing and supporting patients with cancer.



		Check out our [#HealthPathways/online care pathways] for the best-practice guidance for your patients.
	Second week of February	Persistent bloating. Abdominal pain. A loss of appetite. Collectively, these three symptoms could all be signs of ovarian cancer. Head to our new ovarian cancer [#HealthPathways/online care pathways] today to learn about the early signs and symptoms in your patients. [insert HealthPathways/online care pathways link]
	Third week of February	Approximately 75% of Australian women with ovarian cancer are diagnosed at an advanced stage. [#HealthPathways/online care pathways] are aiming to improve early detection and referral of patients with suspected cancer through the launch of the new ovarian cancer pages. Explore them today [insert HealthPathways/online care pathways link]
	26 February 2020 (Teal Ribbon Day)	Today marks @OvarianCancerOz Teal Ribbon Day. Approximately 1600 Australians will be diagnosed this year with ovarian cancer. Victorian PHNs have published pathways for general practice to improve early detection, referral and management of women with ovarian cancer. #KnowActAsk
	First week of March	Mutated BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes are found in most cases of hereditary ovarian cancer. [#HealthPathways/online care pathways] can help refer your patient on for genetic testing. Head to the familial ovarian cancer syndrome page today [insert HealthPathways/online care pathways link]
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Images

STATS & FIGURES OF OVARIAN CANCER

MORE THAN 1600 WOMEN IN AUSTRALIA WILL BE DIAGNOSED EVERY YEAR WITH OVARIAN CANCER

2 women had not heard of ovarian cancer

3 before their diagnosis.

1 in 5 ovarian cancers are hereditary, yet almost 50% of women with ovarian cancer aren't aware of this.

3 women die every day from the disease.

4 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer each day.


IT'S TIME FOR OVARY-ACTION  **OVARIAN CANCER AUSTRALIA**

Image credit: Ovarian Cancer Australia (Hygiene)

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF OVARIAN CANCER

Unexplained fatigue

Unexplained weight gain or loss

Changes in bowel habits, such as constipation

Increased abdominal size or persistent abdominal bloating

Abdominal or pelvic (lower tummy) pain

Feeling full after eating a small amount

Needing to urinate often or urgently



IT'S TIME FOR OVARY-ACTION  **OVARIAN CANCER AUSTRALIA**

Ovarian Cancer Australia (Hygiene)

RISK FACTORS OF OVARIAN CANCER

A family history of ovarian, breast or bowel cancer

Medical conditions such as endometriosis

Increasing age

Use of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)

Obesity

Smoking tobacco

A BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene mutation



IT'S TIME FOR OVARY-ACTION  **OVARIAN CANCER AUSTRALIA**

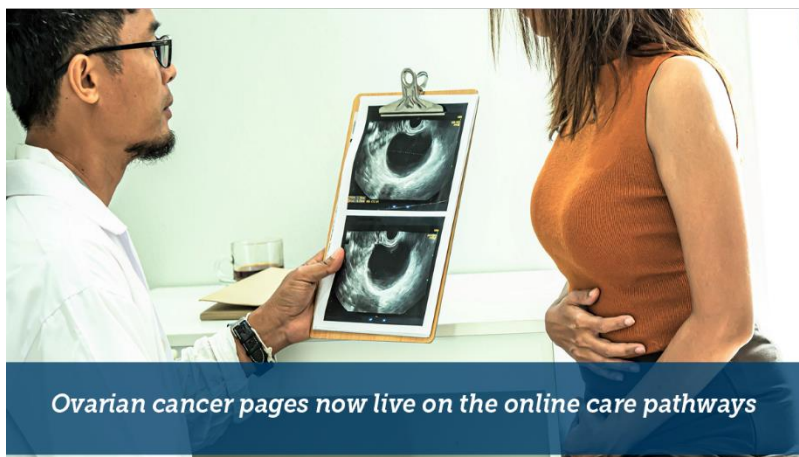
Ovarian Cancer Australia (Hygiene)



Image credit: Ovarian Cancer Australia



Image credit: World Cancer Day



(Hero Images)

