



## Section Four: Making treatment decisions

*Tekiona Whā*

Te whakarite whakataunga  
mō te maimoatanga

### Key points:

- The treatment choices you are offered will be based on all the information available about the cancer and your general health.
- Recommendations will depend on:
  - the type of pancreatic cancer and its stage
  - your general health
  - your personal wishes.

- You will be cared for by a team of health professionals that may include:
  - your GP or whānau doctor
  - oncology nurses and cancer care coordinators
  - a gastroenterologist
  - a surgeon (gastrointestinal)
  - a medical oncologist
  - a radiation oncologist
  - a dietician
  - a palliative care team.
- Before you visit your treatment team, think about any questions you would like to have answered.
- You can ask another doctor for a second opinion about the cancer or treatment options if you want to.

## Ngā kōrero matua:

- Ka hāngai ngā kōwhiringa maimoatanga ka whakaratoa ki a koe i runga anō i ngā pārongo e wātea ana mō te matepukupuku me tō oranga whānui.
- Ka hāngai ngā taunaki ki:
  - te momo matepukupuku repetaiaki huka me te wāhanga kua eke
  - tō oranga whānui
  - Ōu ake tino hiahia
- Ka tiakina koe e tētahi rōpū ngaio hauora, kei roto pea ko ēnei tāngata:
  - tō GP, tō rata whānau rānei
  - ngā tapuhi mātai mate pukupuku me ngā kairuruku mātai kōpiro
  - he mātanga (puku mātai kōpiro)
  - he mātai mate pukupuku
  - he kaimātai matepukupuku hauora
  - he mātanga kaimātai matepukupuku hauora iraruke
  - he mātanga kaiwhakatinana rārangi kai
  - he rōpū whakaora atawhai taurima

- I mua o tō haere ki te kite i tētahi rōpū maimoatanga, ata whakaarotia ētahi pātai e hiahia ana koe kia whakautua.
- E āhei ana koe ki te torotoro i tētahi atu rata mō he kōrero tuarua e pā ana ki te matepukupuku, ki ngā maimoatanga rānei, mēnā e pīrangī ana koe.

## How treatment decisions are made

The treatment choices you are offered will be based on all the information available about the cancer and your general health.

Recommendations will depend on:

- the type of pancreatic cancer and its stage
- your general health
- your personal wishes and goals of care.

## The treatment team

From the time you are diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, you will be cared for by a team of health professionals, including:

- your GP or whānau doctor, who will often be the first person you see
- oncology nurses and cancer care coordinators, who specialise in the care of people with a cancer diagnosis
- a gastroenterologist, who specialises in diseases of the digestive system
- a surgeon (gastrointestinal), who specialises in pancreatic cancer surgery
- a medical oncologist, who specialises in the use of different medications to treat cancer
- a radiation oncologist, who specialises in the use of radiation treatment
- a dietician
- a palliative care team.

Your treatment team may include other health care professionals such as a social worker, psychologist, physiotherapist, practice nurse, community health nurse, pharmacist, or occupational therapist.

## Talking to your cancer treatment team

When you first learn you have pancreatic cancer, you may have many questions. We suggest that, before you visit your cancer treatment team, you think about the questions you would like them to answer and if there is anything you do not

want to be told. There is a lot of information to take in, so it can be helpful to have a support person with you when you visit. See page 49 for some questions you may wish to ask your treatment team.

It is useful to ask your treatment team who to contact, and how, if you have any questions outside your appointment times.

## Asking for a second opinion

You may want to ask another doctor about your cancer or treatment to help you feel more confident about your treatment decision. You can ask your cancer doctor or GP to refer you to another cancer doctor to get a second opinion if you want one.

## Your rights – Health and Disability Commissioner

Your rights as a health and disability service consumer are protected by the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights. If you have concerns about a health and disability service, independent advocates are available to support and guide you, or you can complain directly to the Health and Disability Commissioner.



You can find more information on this website:

[www.hdc.org.nz/your-rights/the-code-and-your-rights](http://www.hdc.org.nz/your-rights/the-code-and-your-rights)

## Interpreting services

The Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights states that everyone has the right to have an interpreter present during a medical consultation. If you do not speak English as your first language or you are deaf, you may find it helpful to use an interpreter when you have your hospital appointments. Speak to a member of your health care team about arranging interpreters in your local area.

## Talking to others

When you have talked about your treatment options with your treatment team, you may want to discuss these options with other people. Talking it over can help you decide what is right for you. You may want to talk to your whānau or friends, specialist nurses, your GP or whānau doctor, the Cancer Society, a hospital social worker, or a spiritual advisor.

## Coping with waiting

Waiting is a big part of receiving your diagnosis and starting treatment. It can take several days, or even weeks, for your treatment team to review your test results before they can discuss treatment options with you.

If you are finding the waiting difficult, contact your treatment team.



You can find more information on coping with waiting on our website: [www.cancer.org.nz/coping-with-waiting](http://www.cancer.org.nz/coping-with-waiting)

## Taking part in a clinical trial

People all over the world have taken part in clinical trials that have improved cancer treatments. There are many new and emerging treatments for cancer, and clinical trials are a vital part of the search to find better treatments.

Clinical trials test new and modified treatments to see if they are better than existing treatments. In a randomised clinical trial, you will receive either the standard treatment currently available or the new treatment being tested. Neither you nor your doctor can decide which treatment you get.

If you are asked to take part in a clinical trial, make sure you fully understand the reasons for the trial and what it means for you. It is your decision whether you take part in a trial or not.