

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position: (Senior) Research Fellow, Analysis of Linked Information on Cancer (VCR.156)

Reports To: Head, Data Analytics,
Victorian Cancer Registry

Classification: Band F or G

CANCER COUNCIL VICTORIA

Every year, more than 35,000 Victorians will be diagnosed with cancer, and nearly 11,000 will die from cancer. The number of cases will increase as our population grows and ages. Survival will also improve as we get better at [early detection](#) and [treatment of cancer](#).

Since our establishment in 1936, [Cancer Council Victoria](#) has developed an international reputation for our innovative work in [cancer research](#), [prevention](#) and [support](#). As an independent, not-for-profit organisation, we play a leading role in reducing the impact of all cancers on all people.

Our people work and volunteer at Cancer Council Victoria to contribute to an organisation that makes a real difference in people's lives and is valued by the community we serve. In return we are proud to foster a culture that supports individuals to reach their full potential, in an environment that reflects our values of **Excellence, Integrity and Compassion**.

DIVISION SUMMARY

The Victorian Cancer Registry (VCR) is a population-based cancer registry that provides comprehensive, accurate and timely information for cancer control by developing and maintaining a high quality, accessible information asset to support epidemiological, clinical, behavioural and health services research and evaluation. The Cancer Council Victoria manage the VCR on behalf of the Department of Health (DH) under a service agreement.

The Victorian Cancer Registry operates a number of programs to:

- Monitor and publicly report on the occurrence of cancer in Victorian residents and generate descriptive statistics on incidence, mortality, prevalence and survival
- Facilitate clinical, behavioural, epidemiological and health services research; evaluation and policy development
- Ensure comprehensive quality data capture that meets the requirements of the cancer control community

- Facilitate cancer genetics research and the provision of clinical services to families

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (VICTORIA)

The DH has broad responsibilities across the Health and Ambulance Services, Public Health, Mental Health and Ageing portfolios. DH also leads the government's public health response and recovery of the COVID-19 pandemic.

DH will remain at the very heart of Victoria's recovery effort – looking after families and taking care of Victorians' loved ones.

A priority for DH will be to deliver ever-better quality healthcare through continuous improvement. We will have Victorians and clinicians at the center of our reforms, continued leadership from our health service executives, and deeper engagement with our academic partners.

Our ultimate vision is to achieve the best health and wellbeing for all Victorians. We will do this through the creation of a department committed to leading an integrated and continually improving healthcare system for health, mental health and aged care.

Cancer Support Treatment and Research Unit (DH)

The DH cancer program has been established to advance the government's policy priorities in improving patient outcomes and experience for all Victorians.

Cancer is the leading burden of disease contributing to almost 30 per cent of deaths in Victoria. The Cancer Support Treatment and Research unit is responsible for coordinating the Victorian Government's cancer reform agenda, commissioning service improvements and delivering Victoria's cancer plan across treatment, wellbeing and support, and research (representing three fifths of the cancer plan).

The Improving Cancer Outcomes Act 2014 requires the Secretary to support efforts in Victoria to reduce cancer incidence, morbidity and mortality and to enhance the wellbeing of those affected by cancer and the wellbeing of Victorians generally. The work of the unit supports the Secretary's obligations under this legislation and spans three teams: Cancer Planning Integration and Monitoring, Cancer Services and Information and the Victorian Cancer Agency.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Cancer Council Victoria (CCV) and the Victorian Department of Health (DH) have established an ongoing collaboration that includes an established annual record linkage of data on Victorian Cancer Registry (VCR) incident cancers to hospital inpatient and emergency department data and population-based radiotherapy data, as well as vital status information from the Victorian and national death registries. The *Analysis of Linked Information on Cancer Team* (ALIC) analyses the linked dataset to identify unwarranted variations in cancer care and report these clearly to relevant stakeholders. The aim is to facilitate the provision of information to improve the quality of care and patient outcomes across Victoria. Data analyses for quality improvement and research are the two functions of the ALIC team, with an emphasis on quality improvement.

POSITION SUMMARY

The position is responsible for leading the work of the *Analysis of Linked Information on Cancer Team* (ALIC), which straddles CCV and DH. In collaboration with clinicians, the position leads the team in developing, conducting,

and reporting analyses to answer key questions around cancer care. The position also leads maintenance and support of a services dashboard. A major component of this work is preparing data presentations and reports for tumour summits, which are collaborative efforts with clinicians from across Victoria that seek to identify progress in care, patient outcomes, and unwarranted variations. These activities inform DH policy and publications (both reports and peer reviewed).

Reporting to the Head, Data Analytics, VCR (CCV) and the Manager, Cancer Planning Integration and Monitoring (DH), the position has direct line management responsibility for a team of analysts who will assist with all team activities.

The position is accountable to CCV and the DH for the development and completion of a team workplan and for reporting on work progress. The incumbent will be expected to take professional responsibility for the reports they produce. The position requires the ability to lead the work under shared governance between the CCV and DH to ensure that goals are met. While they will be formally employed by CCV, the role is shared with the DH, and a large share of the incumbent and the team's work is conducted using DH facilities as this offers access to the linked data.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Vision and Leadership

- Foster an environment of collaboration and sharing of best practice between the CCV and DH, and between Divisions and teams within CCV and DH.
- Lead and manage staff, including monitoring progress against priorities, conducting performance reviews and recruitment.
- Foster a high-performance culture with a focus on quality and continuous learning and improvement.
- Demonstrate the CCV values and support and encourage employees to apply the values of CCV within their work.

Quality Improvement and Data Analytics

- Project leadership, in consultation with the Head, Data Analytics, VCR (CCV) and the Manager, Cancer Planning Integration and Monitoring (DH)
- Identify key issues and formulate questions
- Design, conduct, and supervise statistical analyses of linked datasets to address agreed research/policy/quality improvement questions
- Collaborate closely with data custodians, content experts and relevant stakeholders in the interpretation of outputs
- Collaborate on research projects using linked data
- Supervise students undertaking research using linked data
- Maintain and improve the RShiny dashboard
- Manage ad hoc data requests

Research Management

- Liaise between CCV and DH to agree on research questions to be addressed
- Lead scientific research projects while ensuring CCV and DH governance compliance

- Engage with Centre for Victorian Data Linkage (DH) to facilitate transfer of linked datasets
- Ensure agreed research/policy questions and analysis plans are documented and inform all work undertaken
- Coordinate, collate, review and submit research ethics and governance documentation as required, including new applications, amendments and annual reports

Reporting

- Oversee preparation of progress reports
- Write authoritative reports to inform policy and prepare manuscripts for publication in high-quality, peer-reviewed journals
- Present on studies, data and outcomes in a range of fora to disseminate findings
- Prepare and present material for tumour summit (and other quality improvement) events

Stakeholder Engagement

- Build and strengthen working relationships between CCV and DH
- Build and strengthen working relationships with other CCV Divisions and teams including VCR
- Develop and maintain collaborative relationships internally and with other health organisations, academic institutions and other stakeholders

Such other duties as directed and consistent with the employee's level of skill, competence and training.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential Criteria

Qualifications, Experience, Knowledge and Skills

- Masters with extensive relevant (routine data sets/research) experience or PhD in relevant discipline
- Considerable (Band F) or extensive (Band G) experience in research-related roles
- Considerable (Band F) or extensive (Band G) experience leading and managing staff
- Proven familiarity with statistical packages - must include R programming language (Band F). Extensive knowledge and experience using R programming in a health-related discipline (Band G)
- Sound understanding of epidemiological theory and research methods
- Considerable (Band F) or extensive (Band G) experience in statistical data analysis and the interpretation of results, and data visualisation
- Ability to develop and contribute to the development of research projects and protocols (Band F). Strong leadership experience in the conduct of complex research projects and the development of policies, protocols and procedures (Band G).
- Demonstrated understanding of current privacy legislation and ethical considerations that underpin the responsible conduct of epidemiological

- research, including those related to data linkage activities
- Demonstrated experience in presenting research findings at meetings and conferences
- Proven ability to write and present authoritative reports, and publish in high-quality, peer-reviewed journals
- Ability and willingness to work independently and as part of a team, whilst reporting under a shared governance structure
- Effective interpersonal skills including the ability to develop and maintain strong collaborative partnerships with individuals and groups
- Proven ability to contribute to multiple and more complex research projects and protocols
- Experience working with health-related administrative datasets such as VAED, VEMD, VINAH and/or VRMDS (Band G)

Desirable Criteria

- Experience working with linked datasets
- Experience working with health-related administrative datasets such as VAED, VEMD, VINAH and/or VRMDS (Band F).
- Experience working with clinicians and policy makers on health-related data projects or research
- Experience with RShiny
- Experience in cancer sector

Special Requirements

- Non-smoker
- Right to work in Australia
- Satisfactory completion of National Police Check