

Cancer Conversations: a method for sharing Survivorship issues and perspectives

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This interactive session will present the Canadian "GoPublic Cancer Conversations" methodology along with findings from our survivor-led conversations, including those in Australian Aboriginal communities. 'Cancer Conversations' are a method we used and have adapted for discussing survivorship issues and perspectives.

In 2009 the Canadian GoPublic Campaign to Control Cancer launched a global initiative with a toolkit of resources to help volunteers around the world conduct community conversations. Online forms collected feedback from 201 conversations held around the world, and culminated in 'The Real World of Cancer' report and Global Leadership Forum in Ottawa in 2009. These conversations proved to be an effective way to engage people in developed as well as developing countries eg Africa, India, America, UK and Canada.

Cancer Voices SA held 13 conversations in 2009, and in 2010-11, piloted an adaptation in 3 Australian Aboriginal communities. By talking with people affected by cancer in Aboriginal communities, we aimed to raise awareness about cancer, reduce the stigma of cancer and encourage Aboriginal people to attend health clinics for cancer checkups so cancer can be prevented or detected earlier.

Our experience agreed with the Canadian GoPublic report that: cancer conversations were an effective way to engage people, the conversations seemed to be an important delivery channel for awareness, education and action, participants were encouraged to talk to others about their experience.

Some survivorship issues and perspectives from 'people affected by cancer' will be presented, along with our insights on the positives and challenges using this methodology.