

Oncology workshop focuses on care for young adults

More than 50 health representatives and experts gathered at Cairns Hospital on 24 February, for *Chemo & Crosswords – Adolescent and Young Adults Paediatric Oncology workshop*.

Facilitated by the Cairns Paediatric Oncology Service, the workshop featured guest speakers and practical exercises focusing on improving care for adolescent and young adults (AYA) diagnosed with cancer.

Cairns Hospital Paediatric Oncology Senior Social Worker Jodi Sariman said workshops was designed to improve services delivery and increase understanding in health professionals about the unique challenges that came with the AYA age group. "Unfortunately, in terms of research, funding and service provision, this group is often neglected and as health workers when it comes to helping them cope from diagnoses to treatment and beyond, we are often ill prepared," she said. "The fact is they are not little children, but they are not adults, so providing more support and appropriate service to the age group is definitely a worthy topic."

Ms Sariman said highlights included a presentation on grief and loss from keynote speaker Doris Zagdanski, a talk on suicide, depression and cancer from Dulcie Bird of the Dr Edward Koch Foundation, and a cultural perspective from Debbie Young.



Jodi Sariman and Doris Zagdanski at the Chemo and Crosswords, Adolescent and Young Adult Paediatric Oncology Workshop