**PAPER NUMBER #124**

**Thinking Ahead: Development of an education, vocation and employment resource for adolescents and young adult cancer survivors (a case study)**

**Presenting Author**

Robyn McNeil

**Affiliation**

Centre for Adolescent Health, Murdoch Children’s Research Institute, Victoria

**Country of residence**

Australia

**Objectives/aims**

We undertook a national survey of Adolescents and Young Adults (AYAs) with cancer that identified low rates of participation in education and employment. As we were unable to identify any resources for this age group for whom successful transitions between education and employment inform future life chances, we set out to fill this gap. We aimed to develop an evidence-based, developmentally appropriate resource for AYAs with cancer (and their families) that focused on education, employment and community support services with the goal of supporting their return to education and employment.

**Methods**

Scoping of relevant literature, national vocational policies and initiatives was undertaken to identify key stakeholders, current knowledge and existing resources. Key stakeholders across health, education and welfare sectors were consulted. A focus group of AYAs who had experienced cancer, and their caregivers was also conducted. An iterative consumer consultation and review process was embedded in the work by including the Victorian Youth Cancer Advisory Board as project partners, to inform resource content, mode of delivery and design; and facilitate resource promotion and dissemination.

**Main findings**

The main output was the development of an evidence-based consumer informed resource to aid AYAs with education and vocation decision making, following a cancer diagnosis. Stakeholder partner ‘ownership’ was evident by their commitment to host the resource content online, update content, fund future print runs, and promote and disseminate the resource. A process evaluation was undertaken to examine the implementation of the resource and provide preliminary data on uptake, accessibility and relevance of the resource. An impact evaluation is planned with consumers and health and education sectors.