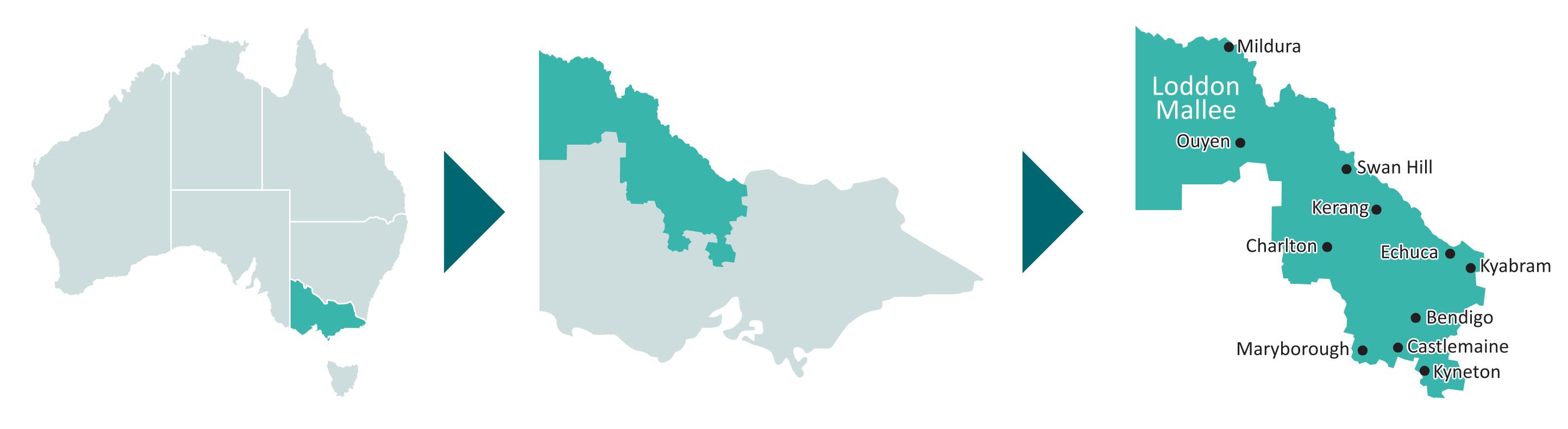
To improve symptom management for patients currently on Immunotherapy living in the Loddon Mallee Region

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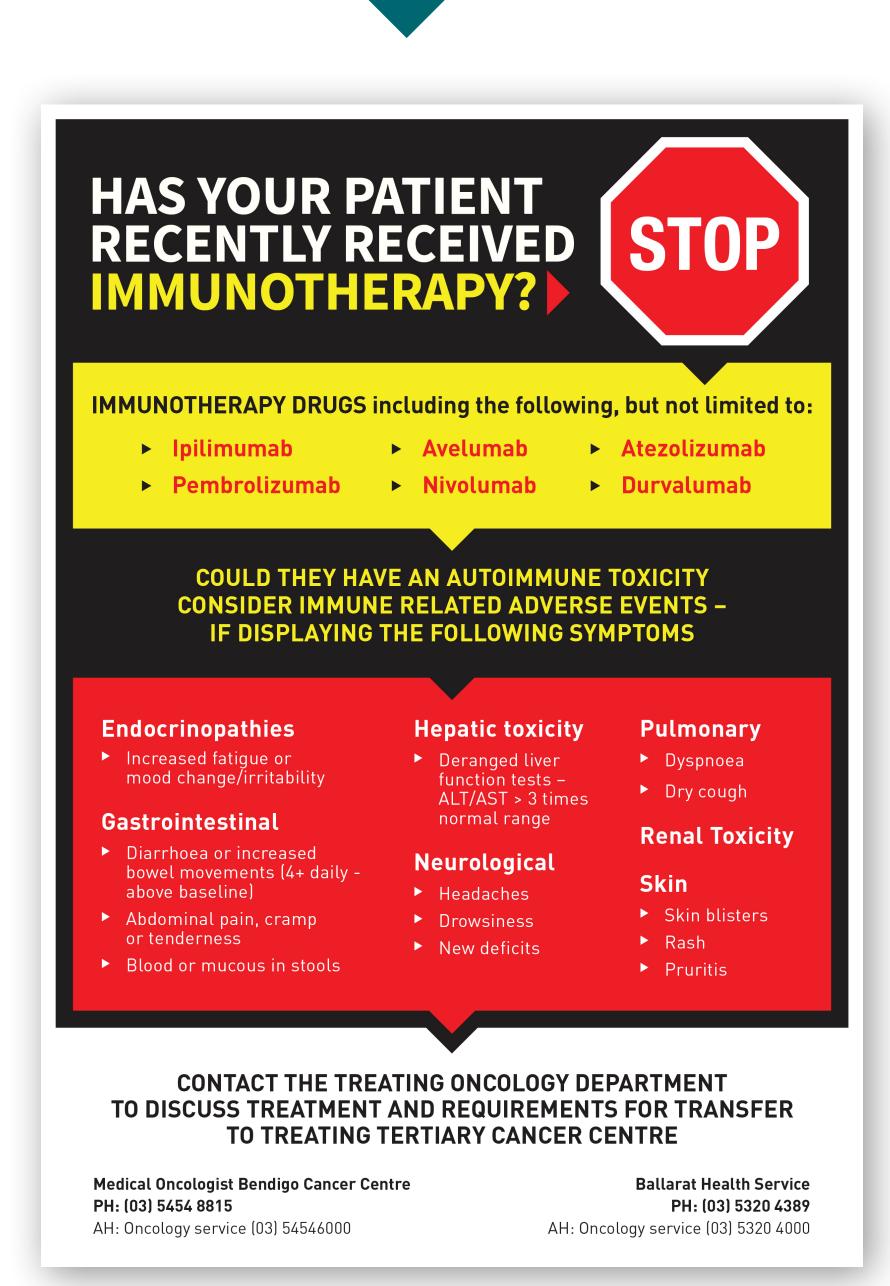
The Loddon Mallee Region (LMR) occupies more than a quarter of the state of Victoria, Australia and covers an area of 58, 961 kilometres. Cancer patient's in this region receive immunotherapy as outpatients in regional, rural or metropolitan hospitals. They rely on local medical and nursing staff often not specialised in oncology to manage unpredictable, insidious and potentially life-threatening symptoms that may arise.

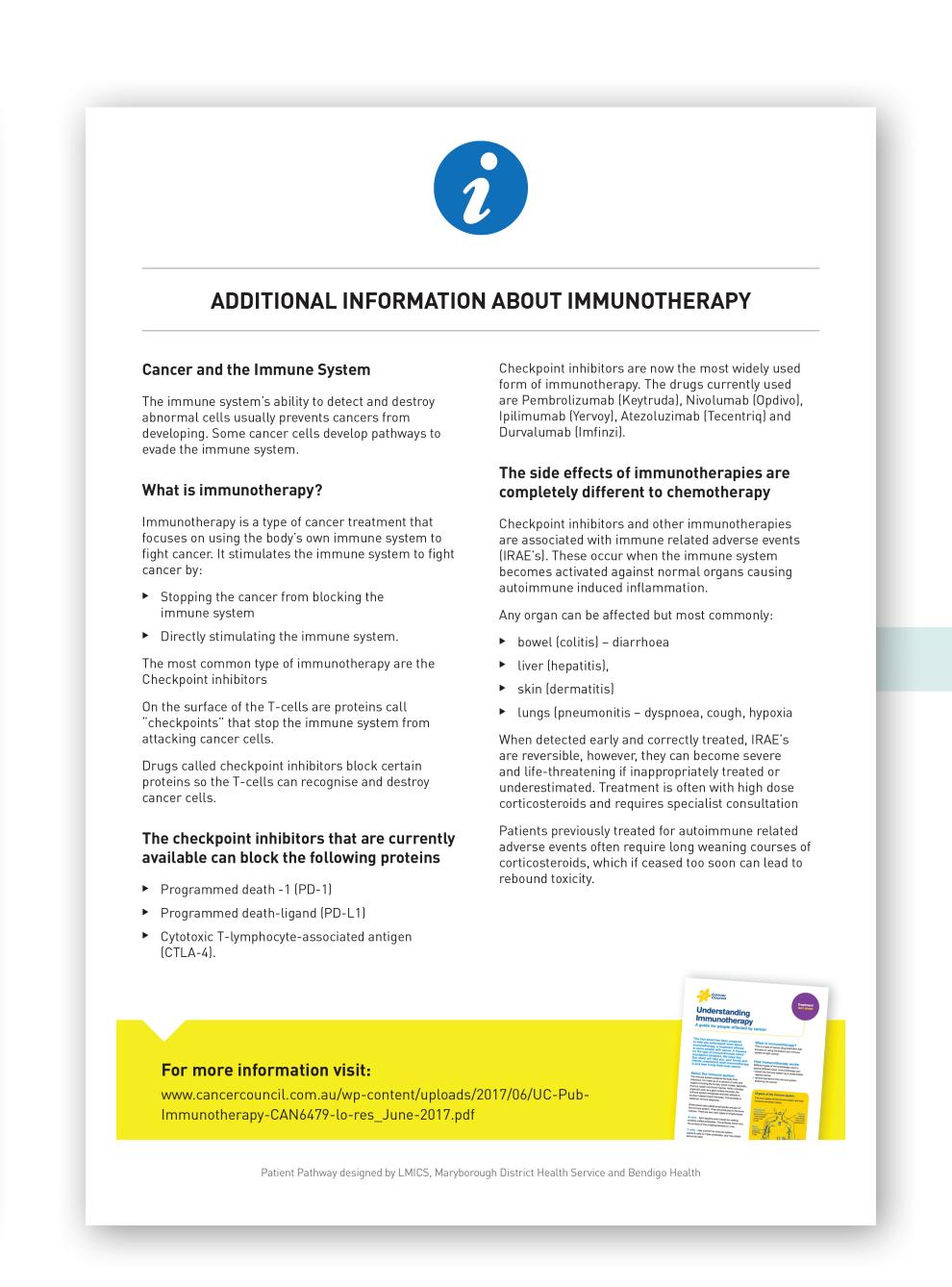


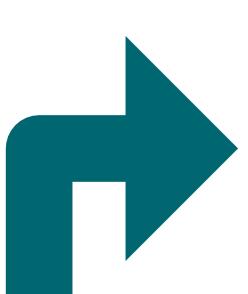
The projects' purpose was to develop and trial a specific immunotherapy patient alert card, an immunotherapy patient pathway for emergency department staff and immunotherapy education for general practitioners and emergency staff.

- The resources were trialed over four sites Bendigo Health, Swan Hill District Health, Kerang District Health and Maryborough District Health Service.
- A working group of stakeholders from all four sites was established and met monthly by teleconference. A patient alert card and patient pathway was developed.
- The patient alert card was aligned with the Australian Triage Scale of minimum Category 3, which is defined as the patient is to be seen within 30 minutes. Emergency Department and General Practitioner Education was also provided at each site.
- There was also a necessity to recognise cross shire and interregional treatment options as patients travel both across to Ballarat (outside the LMR) and to Bendigo for treatment. The Loddon Mallee Integrated Cancer Service funded the project and the Grampians Integrated Cancer Service also participated.

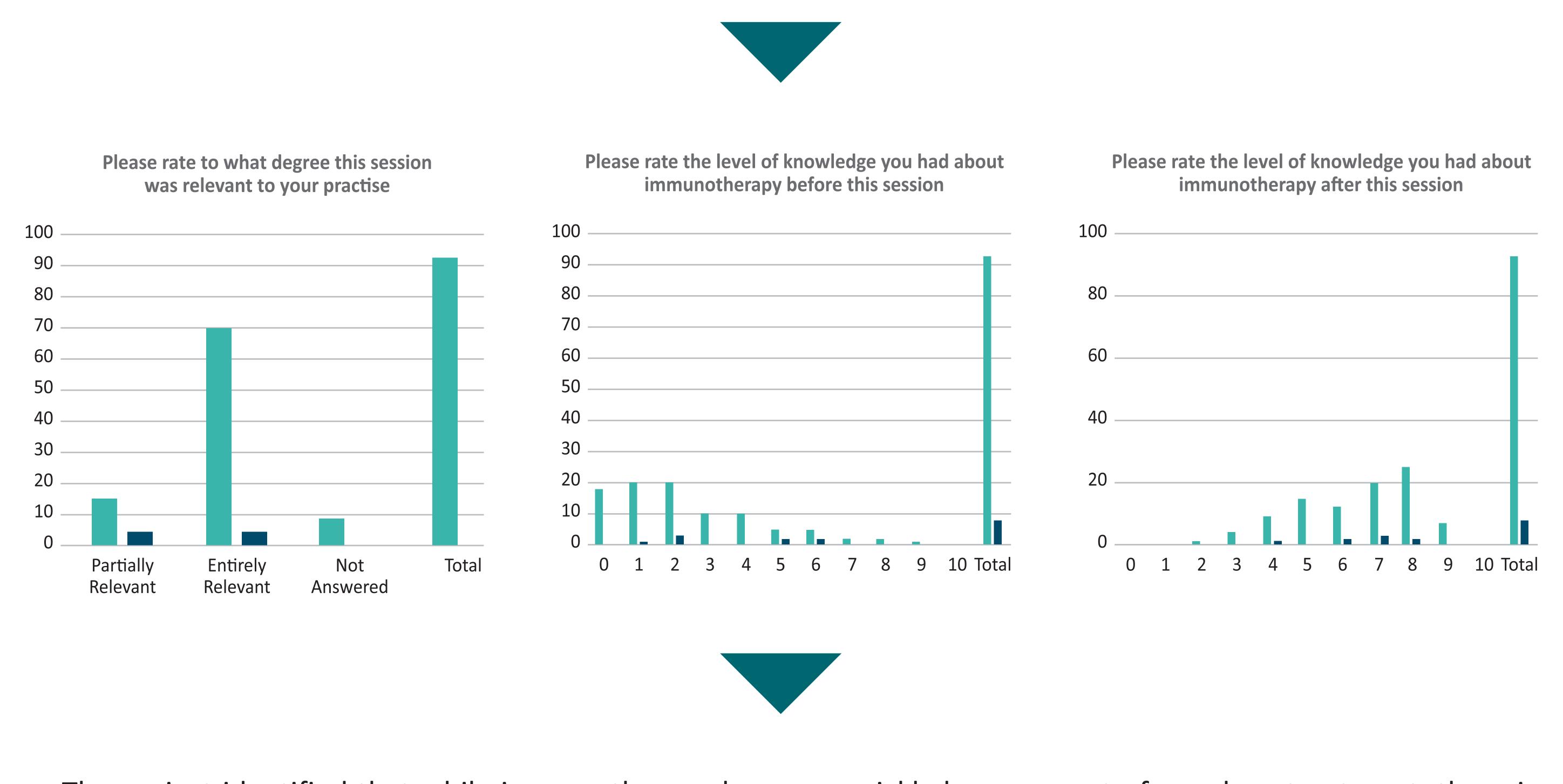








- Early feedback from the LMR health professionals has identified positive results for the patient alert card, pathway and education package reporting it enables easy identifier to the different management required for cancer patients undergoing immunotherapy. While we have had encouraging support from relevant health professionals with the patient alert card and pathway, we aim to further evaluate them both over the next 6-12months.
- We delivered over 22 ED educations with 106 staff attending over the four sites with 101 evaluations completed.
- Over the 101 evaluations collated 73% of participants stated that the education was entirely relevant to their practise, with 18% stating it was partially relevant and 9% of participants didn't respond to the question on the evaluation form.



- The project identified that while immunotherapy has very quickly become part of oncology treatment, there is an information gap for non-oncology health professionals when managing these patients particularly in rural and regional settings.
- By making the patient alert card a different colour and very different to the chemotherapy alert card it has helped identify to general practitioners and emergency departments in addition to the education that the patient needs to be managed differently to someone having chemotherapy.
- Immune checkpoint inhibitors are very new in Australia. This quality improvement project has ensured non-oncology health professionals in non-metropolitan settings are better equipped to care for patients receiving immunotherapy in their local area.







