

Milestones and Achievements



HISTORY:

COUCH is an Action Group that was formed by Charles and Pip Woodward at a public meeting they organised on 4th September, 2006. This meeting was called after cancer sufferer, Liz Plummer highlighted in an interview with the Cairns Post newspaper the inadequate oncology services available in Cairns. These inadequate services cause unnecessary pain and suffering by having to travel to Townsville or Brisbane for treatment.

Alarming statistics have revealed that people with cancer in regional areas are 35% more likely to die within 5 years of diagnosis than patients in larger cities, and mortality rates increase the further away the patients live. For some cancers, remote patients are up to 300% more likely to die within 5 years of diagnosis.

In October 2007, the Federal Government announced a commitment of 8.3 million to build radiation oncology services in Cairns. In January 2009, Premier Anna Bligh announced that Cairns would have radiation oncology by 2012, due to open early in mid 2011.

COUCH is now focused on the planning and construction of a Wellness centre which will provide a holistic approach to treatment and support for cancer patients and their carers.

Milestones

4 th September 2006	1st public Meeting & COUCH formed
29 th November 2006	2nd public meeting
9th Feb 2007	Cairns COUCH Ltd registered as public company
5th March 2007	3rd Public meeting Sub-Committees formed
17 July 2007	4th Public meeting
September 2007	Cairns Cancer Crusade fundraising walk Meeting with Stephen Roberston (then Minister for Health, QLD) Submission to Hon Tony Abbott Minister for Health and Ageing Re need for Radiation oncology services in Cairns
2008	Redlynch family fun run and walk fundraising
January 2010	COUCH receives DGR status effective 1 July 2007.
October 2010	Public meeting held to inform community about Wellness Centre and update on status of COUCH activities
December 2010	Application for HHF Funding (Total pool \$430 Million) lodged
2010—	Wellbeing Centre, accommodation centre planning underway.

Achievements:

October 2007	Federal Govt commitment of \$8.3 Million
January 2009	Premier Anna Bligh announces Radiation oncology and cancer care unit will be built at Cairns Base Hospital and will open in 2012. - Due to open Mid 2011
	Chemo chairs at Cairns Base \$500,000
November 2009	COUCH with the FNQHF purchase an Endobronchial ultrasound (EBUS) machine \$300,000
October 2010	COUCH funds the purchase of one of two Lymphatic Mapping Probes at \$20,000
February 2011	Cairns Regional Council approves sub-division of 100-114 Reservoir road