



Patient Information

About your referral to the Familial Cancer Program

Who is the Genetic Services of WA?

Genetic Services of WA offers a range of services to people with a hereditary condition (passed through families) and those concerned about their risk of developing a hereditary condition. These services are provided by a range of staff, including clinical geneticists and genetic counsellors.

Who might be referred to the Familial Cancer Program?

Most cancers occur by chance and are not hereditary. Less than 1% of people are at a potentially high risk of cancer due to their genetics.

GPs and specialists refer patients who are considered potentially high risk for developing a hereditary cancer. These may include breast, ovarian and bowel cancer, as well as non-cancerous polyp disorders.

What services does the Program offer?

The Familial Cancer Program offers a range of services by telephone, video-conference and face-to-face clinic appointments. We can provide:

- Information about inherited cancers
- An assessment of your risk of developing an inherited cancer
- Advice as to whether genetic testing may be an option for you
- Recommendations for screening and minimising your risk
- Support and counselling for those who are identified as high-risk.

What is genetic testing?

Genetic testing can be used to assess your chance of developing or passing on a genetic condition, or confirm/rule out a suspected genetic condition.

Testing is only possible in some families and must start with a relative who has cancer. It is not always possible to detect a gene fault in the family.

If genetic testing may be an option, the advantages and disadvantages will be discussed with you before any decisions are made to proceed.

Genetic testing involves a blood test to analyse your DNA. No other invasive procedures are required.

What happens next?

Now that your doctor has referred you to GSWA, we will review the information provided and contact you shortly.

To make an accurate assessment we often need additional information about your family. In this case we will either contact you by phone (please note this will be from a private number), or send you some paperwork (by post or email, depending on your nominated preference).

Should you change your mind about your referral and wish not to be contacted by us, please give us a call as soon as possible.

If you have not heard from us within 2 weeks, please contact us on the details below.