

# Equity of Access to Gynaecological Oncology Services

## Is it Achievable for Women Living in Rural and Remote Settings

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### INTRODUCTION

The Flying Obstetrics and Gynaecology Service (FOG) based in Roma QLD provides specialist gynaecology care to women across large areas of southwest QLD. This includes facilitating access for women to tertiary oncology services.

### AIM

The aim of this audit was to review the time interval between referral by the FOG service and initiation of care by the gynaecological oncology department of Mater Hospital South Brisbane. Results were compared with data for the overall population.

### METHOD

A retrospective review was conducted for patients referred by the FOG to the gynaecology oncology service (GONC) between July 2019 and February 2022. Data included time intervals between FOG referral and MDT, initial consultation, and subsequent surgical treatment by the gynaecology oncology department.

### RESULTS

Between July 2019 and February 2022 there were sixty referrals from the FOG service to GONC. Forty-seven referrals subsequently required treatment (81%). Eleven patients (19%) required MDT advice only, and two patients chose private care prior to MDT.

The mean time between FOG referral and GONC MDT was 26 days (range 7 to 81). The mean time between referral and initial consultation was 29.9 days (range 11 to 62).

Forty-four of forty-seven patients (94%) had surgical treatment. The time between referral and surgery was on average 52.6 days (range 21 to 135).

Our data compared favourably with results for the general population which is largely metropolitan. Analysis of 370 referrals from July 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021, showed mean time from referral to MDT was 16.1 days, time to OPD appointment 26.8 days, and time to surgery (217 patients) was 52.9 days. Despite the significant difference in time to MDT there was no significant difference in time to treatment.

	FOG GONC referrals	General GONC referrals	P value independent Samples T-Test
Days from referral to MDT	26 days	16.1 days	<.001
Days from referral to initial consultation	29.9 days	26.8 days	p=0.445
Days from referral to surgery	52.6 days	52.9 days	p=0.960

**DISCUSSION**  
**Equity of access to health services can be achieved in specific areas by providing specialist assessment for patients as close to home as possible. Having direct access to Gynaecological Oncology planning for MDT and outpatient, including telehealth, bookings is also a key factor in achieving these results.**

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