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Australia issues new guidelines for cancer surviving children

April 5, 2021 | News

The new guideline aims to ensure children are monitored up until adolescence and receive the treatment they need



In a world-first, new National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) endorsed guidelines provide recommendations to ensure that children are provided follow up care for communication and swallowing until adolescence and that health professionals and families are more aware of these issues.

Up to 80 percent of children treated for brain cancer or leukaemia go on to develop communication problems from their cancer and lifesaving treatment.

“The incidence of childhood brain cancer and leukaemia is rising, but thankfully so too are the survival rates due to advances in medical care and treatments,” said Dr Kimberley Docking, Director of the NeuroKids Research Laboratory in the University of Sydney’s Faculty of Medicine and Health and Chair of the Guideline Development Committee.

The new guideline aims to ensure children are monitored up until adolescence and receive the treatment they need.

They are translated into six languages and hinge on two key recommendations:

1. Communication assessment and intervention should be offered to children diagnosed with childhood brain tumour or leukaemia
2. Swallowing assessment and management should be offered to children diagnosed with childhood brain tumour or leukaemia