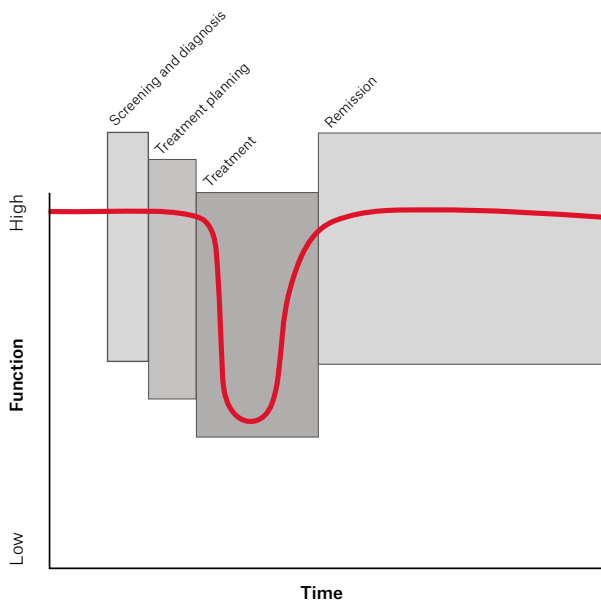


Box 1. Cancer illness trajectories

Annika, aged 40 years, is a woman who has been diagnosed with breast cancer after a routine mammogram. Because breast cancer is a common disease, there are clear management guidelines, and the diagnostic and treatment planning stages are relatively brief. Annika will have access to clear information about treatment pathways, good estimates of prognosis and multiple sources for lived experience narratives to understand her treatment course.

Marita, aged 40 years, is a woman with a history of lupus, moderate renal failure, depression and adrenal cancer. Her diagnostic phase is protracted because of the difficulties involved in detecting cancer with non-specific symptoms in the context of an existing multisystem disease. Her treatment planning will also be more complex than Annika’s. Marita is unlikely to have clear information available about her treatment options, good estimates of prognosis or lived experience narratives to understand her treatment course, and she will therefore need to tolerate a higher level and longer period of uncertainty.

Annika’s illness trajectory



Marita’s illness trajectory

