Cancer Strategic Clinical Network

Quarterly Newsletter: January to March 2020

The Cancer Strategic Clinical Network (CSCN) is committed to providing our Core Committee and stakeholders with updates regarding our projects and activities. Currently, CSCN staff have been redeployed to assist with the COVID-19 pandemic. Some team members are assisting at Health Link (811) while others assist CancerControl Alberta (CCA) leadership to develop plans for the prioritization of care for cancer patients during a pandemic. Please find an abbreviated update on behalf of the CSCN.

CSCN Transformational Roadmap:

In 2019, the CSCN initiated discussions with its Core Committee and stakeholders to refresh its Transformational Roadmap (TRM) and identify new areas of focus. CSCN's new TRM 2020-2024 is a result of a comprehensive consultation and planning process that sought input from the cancer community on how to strategically transform cancer care in Alberta. The TRM was expected to be released in spring 2020 but will be postponed due to COVID-19. Please contact <u>tara.bond@ahs.ca</u> if you require a copy of the CSCN's Strategic Directions.

Provincial Breast Health Initiative:

The Provincial Breast Health Initiative continues to improve care for breast cancer patients, with a focus on processes for genetic testing, implementing multidisciplinary team reviews of complex breast cancer cases (e.g. tumour board rounds), and a provincial measurement framework for the end-to-end breast health pathway. Work on this initiative has been paused due to the organizational focus on COVID-19. Prior to the pause in work and redeployment of resources, the following activities were accomplished:

Mainstreaming:

- Developed educational materials for training radiation oncologists (ROs). ROs can now facilitate genetic testing for eligible patients in addition to medical oncologists and breast surgeons.
- Established a genetics mainstreaming working group to ensure sustainability. Enhancing Navigation:
 - Implemented Provincial Tumour Board Rounds for pre-intervention and ongoing management in Edmonton/North Zone. The processes to convene pre-intervention Tumour Board Rounds in Calgary Zone is complete and pending implementation after the pandemic.
 - Developing recommendations for Clinical Operations Executive Committee to ensure ongoing quality improvement and sustainability of navigation supports

Diagnostic Assessment:

Alberta Health Inspiring solutions.

• Central Zone Primary Care Network members have agreed to adopt and spread the expedited diagnostic assessment pathway.



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Accelerating the Diagnosis of Cancer:

This emerging initiative aims to design and implement a provincial cancer diagnosis program to expedite diagnosis and provide navigation, psychosocial and educational support. Work on this initiative has been paused due to the organizational focus on COVID-19. Prior to the pause in work and redeployment of resources, the following activities were accomplished:

- Practice Leads North and Senior Analyst have been recruited to support pathway implementation and evaluation, measurement and reporting
- Lymphoma Diagnosis Pathway
 - Developed standardized CT and ultrasound reporting statement for findings that meet highly suspicious criteria
 - Developed a biopsy patient education sheet
 - o Identified implementation teams North and South
 - Developed practice support tool for lymphoma RN triage role in the pathway
- Colorectal Cancer Diagnosis Pathway
 - Achieved consensus to develop pathways for high risk rectal bleeding and iron deficiency
 - Completed literature review on symptom presentations and associated risk of colorectal cancer and risk of hospitalization before diagnosis
 - Conducted interviews with specialists and primary care providers on perspectives on challenges and opportunities for colorectal cancer diagnosis
 - Obtained ethics approval to initiate interviews with patients diagnosed during hospital admissions on challenges and opportunities for colorectal cancer diagnosis

CSCN Research:

The CSCN research team supports priority initiatives of the CSCN as required. It also continues to engage with multiple stakeholders to identify and nurture research-practice partnerships, which will create and apply knowledge that improves cancer outcomes.

- Two cancer related applications were advanced for the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Health System PRIHS 6 (2020/2021) funding competition. The submission date for the next stage of the funding competition is postponed to Fall 2020.
- CSCN is defining quality indicators to measure progress and success related to the three strategic directions defined in our new TRM 2020-2024. Literature reviews, consultations with experts and facilitated discussions with key stakeholders including our Core Committee are continuing.
- A practicum student from the University of Alberta, Xin Grevers, completed a rapid review that describes trends in cancer incidence and survivorship, potential impacts to the healthcare system, and plans proposed by healthcare organizations across Canada to mitigate these impacts. The report will inform future CSCN discussions of future priorities.
- Related to the COVID-19 pandemic, CSCN assisted the Critical Care SCN with research to support the development of recommendations for wear time of N95 respirators and strategies to conserve personal protective equipment supplies.