

# Cancer Strategic Clinical Network

## Why was the Cancer SCN created?

The Cancer SCN is mandated to transform cancer control across the province. As such, the Cancer SCN brings together provincial stakeholders from prevention programs, health care delivery services, research institutes, and policy development groups to lead and support evidence-based improvements and innovation in cancer prevention and management in Alberta. We pursue strategic initiatives, collaborative partnerships, and research to enable the best possible health for Albertans and to empower clinicians to provide care that is patient-focused, accessible, and sustainable.

## Who's involved?

Our members include senior clinicians, operation and strategy leaders, policy makers, researchers, key community leaders, frontline staff, and patients and families from across Alberta. There are also collaborations with academic partners to create new knowledge and translate it into measurably improved health and health care for Albertans.

## What work is under way?

- **Alberta Rectal Cancer Clinical Pathway:** This initiative aims to reduce the rate of rectal cancer recurrence through design, implementation and evaluation of a knowledge translation strategy that promotes uptake of a provincial rectal cancer clinical pathway. Surgeons, academics, doctors and Alberta Health Services' administrators will work together to deliver targeted communications, physician education sessions, provincial outcomes reporting platforms, and multidisciplinary medical rounds to implement and reinforce best practices in care for rectal cancer patients.
- **Head & Neck Cancer Surgery Pathway:** A provincial care pathway has been created for major head and neck cancer surgery patients focusing on high observation protocols and the inpatient stay. This pathway has substantially improved patient outcomes, improved quality of life, and has generated substantial capacity at the University of Alberta Hospital (UAH) and the Foothills Medical Centre (FMC) without new resources.
- **Provincial Breast Cancer Clinical Care Pathway:** This provincial initiative will build on local successes by implementing innovative care pathways that will address shortcomings in the care women with breast cancer receive in Alberta. This includes: better coordination of diagnostic assessment; ensuring women with breast cancer receive evidence-based perioperative care; and, facilitating access to appropriate and timely breast reconstructive care.
- **Palliative and End of Life Care:** Patients with advanced stage chronic disease, organ failure or advanced stage cancer often present to the emergency department in crisis. These patients are often admitted and die in hospital without receiving appropriate and timely palliative and end-of-life care. The Cancer SCN is working with local clinical teams to design and implement an intervention to identify patients in need of palliative and end-of-life care in Alberta's emergency departments and coordinate appropriate and timely care in a care setting that meets the wishes and values of patients and their families.