

BC as a model province for personalized treatment of Lymphoid cancer

To date, genomic personalization of cancer treatment has only been applied in research settings, not day-to-day medical care, and has not been widely available to patients especially when they live at a distance from research centres. A research project led by the Centre for Lymphoid Cancer at BC Cancer has demonstrated that inclusion of cutting edge research can be provided for patients all across British Columbia in a practical way that rapidly and cost-effectively enables local cancer specialists to use genomic sequencing information to identify different and more effective treatments than would otherwise be offered.

Core components of this project have been the careful analysis of all the costs and cost savings that result from personalized lymphoid cancer care and development of economic analytic tools that enable health care planners to assess the economic impact when similar techniques are applied to treating other cancers and other diseases. This project used BC as a real world laboratory to show that genomic analysis will be able to cost-effectively cure more cancer patients in a way that can readily be duplicated elsewhere around the world.

Establishment of the BioCancer Initiative

Dr. Christian Steidl from the Centre for Lymphoid Cancer at BC Cancer has recently joined forces with the breast and prostate tumour groups at BC Cancer led by Drs. Stephen Chia, Samuel Aparicio and Dr. Kim Chi, respectively, to create a province-wide system for patient consent of biospecimen collection for translational research, and to build comprehensive research and clinical databases housing clinical outcome and analysis data for each tumour type. Called the BioCancer initiative, an integrated system of BC Cancer's six regional centers allows recruitment of cancer patients and specimen acquisition from all across the province for translational research, overcoming under-representation of the patient population from remote areas such as the Northern region. This multi-disciplinary collaboration among the lymphoma, breast and prostate groups will be extended to other tumour groups within BC Cancer.

PATIENT & FAMILY COUNSELLING

Web-based advance care planning resources for cancer patients

Advance care planning is the process of thinking about and writing down your wishes or instructions for present or future health care treatment in the event that you become incapable of deciding for yourself. It involves having conversations that are difficult for patients, physicians and care providers, but are very beneficial in supporting treatment and end-of-life decisions consistent with what patients want. **Martha Cresswell**, a Master's student and nurse at BC Cancer – Kelowna, in collaboration with researchers at BC Cancer and UBC, examined the use of software called PREPARE – a web-based advance care planning resource

(www.prepareforyourcare.org) – for use within cancer care. Funded by the BC Cancer Foundation and published in the journal *Supportive Care in Cancer*, the study found that overall cancer patient participants found PREPARE to be acceptable, applicable, and understandable for advance care planning. It engaged them in personal reflection, helping to clarify their beliefs and values, though some had difficulty with the end-of-life language. Follow-up research is needed to determine whether some of the terminology it uses causes distress or disengagement with the planning process, but overall the web-based resource appears to be a good first step toward easing into difficult conversations associated with advanced care planning.

