

## Building Bridges, Strengthening Care

The Family Practice Oncology Network continues its evolution within BC Cancer's Provincial Primary Care Program with the goals of better reflecting and serving the needs of primary care providers within the formal cancer care system, strengthening communication between these levels of care. Our central focus this year was determining how to move forward most effectively with implementing the recommendations of our comprehensive Primary Care Needs Assessment. We completed this assessment with the University of British Columbia's Division of Continuing Professional Development (UBC CPD) in 2018, with resulting priorities being to:

- 1) advocate for improved access to clinical resources/services for patients;*
- 2) develop primary care practice tools to support patients with cancer; and*
- 3) provide oncology education and training for primary care physicians.*

## Communication and Collaboration

Bringing together stakeholders from all levels of care to share ideas and initiate care-enhancing projects is pivotal to our success with the above. To that end, we are building key relationships with Divisions of Family Practice, with BC Cancer's Executive and Regional Centres, and with the primary care and oncology leads at each of the Health Authorities to better understand specific challenges we can assist with, and successes we can share more broadly. Support for these efforts is timely as primary care delivery in BC transitions to a system of Patient Medical Homes, Primary Care Networks, and Specialized Community Service Programs designed to increase primary care capacity and access to supportive and specialized care.

## Cancer Care Guidelines for Primary Care

Development and publication of brief, customized cancer care guidelines for primary care is another key recommendation we continue to focus on. This effort includes an ongoing, much appreciated partnership with the BC Guidelines and Protocols Advisory Committee (GPAC) working together currently to finalize a continuum guideline on Prostate Cancer including algorithms to help physicians to advise patients on testing decisions.

Further, we recently secured funding through the BC Cancer Foundation and PHSA's Health System Redesign Fund to enable development of a Primary Care Lung Cancer Guideline which will provide recommendations for prevention, screening, diagnosis, management and follow-up of patients who are at risk or have been diagnosed with lung cancer. The guideline will also outline opportunities of shared care across the cancer care journey including elements needed for transitions of care and advance care planning. Work is set to begin early next year with a working group of primary care physicians, a GPO, oncologists, a surgeon, and a respirologist collaborating on this project.

## Primary Care Learning Sessions: Online and In-Person

Support for the continued development and expansion of our small group learning workshops was also highlighted in our Needs Assessment. We are thus continuing our partnership with UBC CPD working to update and transform three of this series' original modules – colorectal, breast, and prostate cancer – into online modules, plus beginning work on a new module (topic under development) to be presented both online and in communities throughout BC. The initial online modules will launch the first half of next year while the new module will debut later in 2020.

We have a dedicated working group of primary care physicians, oncologists and surgeons reviewing and updating the content for each module. This work is also benefiting from patient representatives adding insightful perspective to all discussions.

## Our Core Programs

Meanwhile, our well established programs and initiatives continue as part of the Provincial Primary Care Program. Here's where they are at today:

### GPO Education Program

The Network continues to offer its eight-week GPO Education Program designed to provide rural family physicians with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to deliver systemic therapy in their communities, and to provide supportive care for cancer patients and their families. Offered twice yearly since 2004, there are currently 84 graduates of this program working as GPOs in 33 BC and Yukon communities. Nine more are in the process of completing the program.

These physicians, working in collaboration with BC Cancer oncologists, play an integral role in ensuring high quality cancer care is available as close to patients' homes as possible, and contribute significantly to the sustainability of our cancer care system. GPOs also serve as helpful oncology resources and educators for their local primary care community.

All newly hired BC Cancer GPOs and Nurse Practitioners also complete the foundational Introductory Module of the GPO Education Program, as do the UBC Palliative Care Year of Added Competency residents. This program is accredited by UBC CPD on behalf of the College of Family Physicians of Canada and continues to garner national and international recognition.

### Oncology CME Webcasts

We also continue to host our complimentary interactive Oncology CME Webcast series with experts presenting monthly, on current and emerging oncology topics. An average of 100 family physicians from throughout BC and beyond participate in every session with many more viewing the recordings posted at [www.fpon.ca](http://www.fpon.ca). This program, launched in 2010, is delivered in partnership with UBC CPD, and is also accredited by UBC CPD on behalf of the College of Family Physicians of Canada.

### Family Practice Oncology CME Day and GPO Case Study Day

These are the Network's most significant in-person oncology CME offerings of the year – Family Practice Oncology CME Day, focussing on the most in-demand oncology topics for primary care, and GPO Case Study Day, an interactive opportunity to explore prevalent and emerging challenges faced by primary care providers working in oncology. Both events are accredited and held as part of BC Cancer's Summit.

### Journal of Family Practice Oncology

The Network continues to publish its twice-yearly Journal of Family Practice Oncology distributed to all ~6,900 family physicians in BC and the Yukon. The Journal, first published in 2003, aims to provide succinct, practice ready oncology information for primary care plus provides a means of connection for all involved. (Please let us know if there is a topic you would like to see covered.)

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## For More Information

**Visit [www.fpon.ca](http://www.fpon.ca) or contact any of our small, but mighty team:**

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*The Family Practice Oncology Network – providing cancer care education and resources for primary care providers throughout BC and the Yukon, and bringing the lens of primary care to BC Cancer – [www.fpon.ca](http://www.fpon.ca)*