

Ontario Cancer News



CCO and partners to formulate GTA Cancer Plan to 2014

Cancer Care Ontario has brought together cancer stakeholders from across the Greater Toronto Area to begin formulating a plan for cancer services to the year 2014. Dubbed "GTA 2014", the plan will address the full spectrum of cancer services including prevention and screening, imaging and diagnostics, pathology and labs, surgery, radiotherapy, systemic therapy, and supportive and palliative care. All cancer care providers in the GTA who spend a significant portion of their budget on cancer activities or who participate significantly in providing cancer-related care are invited to contribute to formulating the plan.

GTA 2014 is the first regional plan that Cancer Care Ontario will coordinate. Ultimately, every cancer region in the province will complete a similar plan. These plans will be consolidated to form the Ontario Cancer Plan. Using the regional and provincial plans as the foundation, Cancer Care Ontario will advise the government on supporting local, regional and provincial endeavours and new entities.

For more information, send e-mail to publicaffairs@cancercare.on.ca.



Cancer Care Ontario seeks a new vision

Over the last year, Cancer Care Ontario has focused on the integration of Ontario's cancer services. This summer, Cancer Care Ontario and 11 hospitals around the province began to implement an agreement to establish regional integrated cancer programs to improve the cancer system for patients and their families.

As the hospitals take on the responsibility for direct management and delivery of patient services, Cancer Care Ontario's direction shifts to planning, performance improvement and system change. With this mandate, the agency now has the ability to reach not just the 50% of Ontario cancer patients and families served by the old organization, but all of the 11 million people living in the province.

With these changes comes a need for a vision statement that fits the new Cancer Care Ontario. We have solicited input from cancer system staff across the province, which will be used to generate discussion at an upcoming management and Board planning retreat this fall. Our goal is to have a new vision statement approved by the Board in the new year.

If you would like to contribute to a new vision statement for Cancer Care Ontario, send your suggestions to publicaffairs@cancercare.on.ca.



Integration update

Since signing cancer program integration agreements with 11 host hospitals across the province this June, efforts have been focused on building the newly integrated cancer programs in the regions.

Each hospital is adding in-patient services, and in some cases additional ambulatory and diagnostic services, to the out-patient services provided by the cancer centres, all of which will come together under the single leadership of a regional vice president for cancer services. Cancer Care Ontario will continue to oversee the funds that will be transferred to partner hospitals for cancer care based on quality, performance and reporting requirements.

Though we've already begun implementing the terms of the integration agreements, the actual target date for staff to transfer from Cancer Care Ontario to the hospitals remains December 31, 2003. Until then, current CCO staff remain as CCO employees. Local human resources transition plans, joint efforts between the cancer centres and their host hospitals, are being put in place in each region to guide everyone through this next period of transition.

If you are CCO staff member with questions about the new integrated cancer programs, please contact the office of your regional vice president of cancer services.



Capital projects update

Cancer Care Ontario's capital projects office manages the planning and construction of multiple complex cancer centres, along with several major expansion projects. Following is an update on each of these projects.

Algoma Regional Cancer Program

A joint venture between Sault Area Hospital, Group Health Centre and Cancer Care Ontario, the expanded Algoma Regional Cancer Program opened its doors to cancer patients on March 24, 2003. The 7,000 square-foot facility is more than double the size of the former cancer clinic, and offers improved patient privacy and comfort, larger treatment and waiting areas, and improved access to diagnostic and treatment services. The total cost of the project was \$550,000. A full-service cancer centre including radiation therapy is being planned as part of a new Sault Ste. Marie hospital scheduled to open in 2008.

Durham Regional Cancer Centre

Located at Lakeridge Health in Oshawa, this new regional cancer centre has a projected completion date of 2007. The facility will have six radiation treatment machines and will provide expanded services in radiation, systemic therapy and surgical oncology. Durham Regional Cancer Centre serves the regions/counties of Durham, Haliburton, Hastings, Metro Toronto, Northumberland, Peterborough and Victoria. Construction costs are estimated at \$35-million, with a total project value of approximately \$72.4-million.

Grand River Regional Cancer Centre

This regional cancer centre, located at the Grand River Hospital in Kitchener, was occupied on September 15, 2003. Serving the regions/counties of Brant, Bruce, Dufferin, Grey, Halton, Hamilton, Wentworth, Waterloo R.M., Welling Perth and Oxford, the Centre will have the capacity for six radiation treatment machines, with the first unit expected to start treating patients in November 2003. The estimated total project value is \$56.7-million.

Hamilton Regional Cancer Centre

A redevelopment project at the Hamilton Health Sciences Henderson Hospital site replaces space lost in another hospital wing, and provides additional capacity to meet radiation treatment demand, with a total of six radiation machines. The projected occupancy date is early 2004. An additional project to expand systemic therapy and research spaces has recently begun and will be completed late in 2004. Hamilton Regional Cancer Centre serves the Central West area of Ontario, with a population of approximately two million. The estimated total project value is \$56-million.

London Regional Cancer Centre

London Regional Cancer Centre, located on the Westminster site of London Health Sciences Centre, is constructing two additional treatment rooms to house two replacement radiation treatment units. The projected completion date for this project is Summer 2004. At capacity, the Centre will have 10 radiation treatment machines in operation. LRCC serves the regions/counties of Bruce, Grey, Huron, Kent, Lambton, Middlesex, Oxford, Perth and Waterloo. The estimated total project value is approximately \$3.7-million.

Northeastern Ontario Regional Cancer Centre

A major expansion of the radiation treatment and research areas at Northeastern Ontario Regional Cancer Centre is expected to be complete by Fall 2004. At capacity, the Centre will operate five radiation treatment machines. NEORCC serves the regions/counties of Blind River, Bracebridge, Chapleau, Cochrane, Elliot Lake, Huntsville, Iroquois Falls, Kapuskasing, Kirkland Lake, Matheson, Mattawa and New Liskeard. The total project value is \$22-million.

Northwestern Ontario Regional Cancer Centre

The projected completion date is Spring 2004 for a replacement cancer centre located on the new Thunder Bay Regional Hospital site, adjacent to Lakehead University. The new Northwestern Ontario Regional Cancer Centre will have the capacity to operate three radiation treatment units. The Centre serves the districts of Thunder Bay, Kenora and Rainy River, and Hearst in the Cochrane District, with a total catchment population of approximately 300,000. The construction cost of the new cancer centre is estimated at \$20-million.

Peel Regional Cancer Centre

This new regional cancer centre, located at Credit Valley Hospital, has a projected occupancy date of fall 2005. Peel Regional Cancer Centre will have the capability to operate six radiation treatment machines. The Centre will serve the regions/counties of Dufferin, Halton, Metro Toronto, Peel, Simcoe and Wellington.

Other major projects in planning

Cancer Care Ontario is working with Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and a number of hospitals to plan for the development of regional cancer centres in Barrie at Royal Victoria Hospital; in St Catharines with Niagara Health System; and in Newmarket with Southlake Hospital.

Major redevelopment projects are planned for the cancer centres in Kingston and Ottawa.



CCO research study shows no link between antihistamines and breast cancer

A Cancer Care Ontario study has found that women who regularly use antihistamines face no increased risk for breast cancer.

Previous animal studies have investigated the link between antihistamines and cancer because of the similarities between antihistamines and DPPE, a substance known to promote tumour growth in animal models. These studies found that existing tumours accelerated in growth when animals were given human equivalent doses of certain antihistamines.

"There were several reasons we thought it was important to examine the link between antihistamines and breast cancer," said researcher Victoria Nadalin, the study's lead author. "Given the high incidence of breast cancer and the widespread use of antihistamines, combined with the results of previous studies and the lack of epidemiological investigation, we thought it was important to carry out a more thorough study into the association between the two."

Using a population based case-control study design, Cancer Care Ontario researchers compared a randomly selected group of women diagnosed with breast cancer—using the Ontario Cancer Registry—to a randomly selected control group—using the Ontario Ministry of Finance assessment rolls.

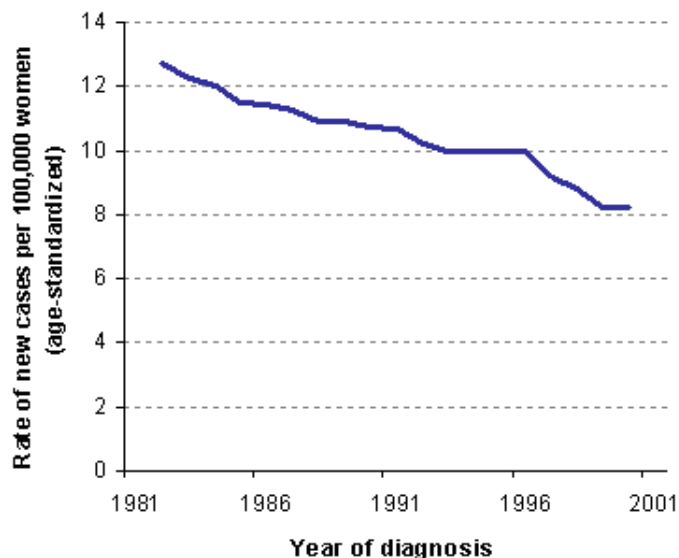
Both groups completed a self-administered questionnaire that included questions about use of antihistamines and other medications, as well as demographic and other variables that might be related to breast cancer risk. Through analysis of the responses, the researchers found that there was no association between the use of antihistamine medications and breast cancer risk—either by age at first use, by duration or by type of antihistamine.

However, the researchers do note that their findings should be interpreted cautiously since they were unable consider a number of factors including the examination of every antihistamine individually and antihistamine dose. In addition, for the individual antihistamines that were explored, there were relatively few users.

The study results are published in the September issue of the *International Journal of Cancer*.

Ontario Cancer Fact

New cases of cervical cancer in Ontario, 1981-2001



Source: Ontario Cancer Registry

The rate of new cases of cervical cancer has fallen steadily in Ontario over the past 20 years. This is likely due an increase in the number of women having Pap tests. The rate fell more quickly in the late 1990s. In the mid 1990s a new program encouraged women to have Pap tests. Around the same time, better ways of doing the tests were introduced.

Pap tests find changes in cells that can be treated so cancer does not develop. They also find cervical cancer early.

The Ontario Cervical Screening Program recommends that women who have ever had sex should have regular Pap tests.

For more information, talk to your health care provider, go to http://www.cancercare.on.ca/prevention_cervicalScreening.htm, or call one of the following: your local public health unit, the Canadian Cancer Society's Cancer Information Service (1.888.939.3333), or the Ontario Cervical Screening Program (416.971.9800, ext 1144).



Coming this fall...

OBSP welcomes 100th screening site

Since opening its first centre in 1990, the Ontario Breast Screening Program has screened almost 500,000 women for breast cancer. To celebrate the opening of its 100th screening site, the OBSP is hosting an event on October 7 at 10:30am at North York Hospital, Branson Division. For information, send e-mail to lorna.dobi@cancercare.on.ca.

OCSF seminar on HPV testing takes place October 8

This October 8, the Ontario Cervical Screening Program will host a one-day seminar titled the "Role of HPV Testing and Implications for Cervical Cancer Prevention and Screening." Keynote speaker Dr. Eduardo Franco is an internationally renowned epidemiologist and expert on HPV and cervical cancer. He will address epidemiological and biological evidence that links HPV with cervical cancer, as well as implications for health care professionals involved in cancer prevention and screening. Dr. Franco will explore new developments in prevention and treatment, and implications for the future, including development of a vaccine for HPV.

Cancer Quality Council of Ontario to launch book: *Strengthening the Quality of Cancer Services in Ontario*

In late October, the Cancer Quality Council of Ontario will release a two-volume book, *Strengthening the Quality of Cancer Services in Ontario*, edited by Terrence Sullivan, William Evans, Helen Angus and Alan Hudson. The book's 13 chapters, written by more than 30 experts in the fields of oncology, health services research and policy, describe the current state of the Ontario cancer system from prevention through to palliation and set an agenda for targeted quality improvement.

Watch the October issue of *Ontario Cancer News* for ordering information. A synopsis of the two-volume book will also be available on the Cancer Care Ontario Web site in mid October.

Proceedings of "Colorectal Cancer Control in Ontario, Opportunities for Quality Improvement" to be published

In late October, the Cancer Quality Council of Ontario will publish proceedings from its first annual signature event on quality improvement in colorectal cancer. The event, held in June 2003, consisted of a working meeting that brought together clinical practice leaders, policy makers, health care administrators managers, patient advocates and patients to focus on quality improvement strategies for the control of colorectal cancer. A major focus of the meeting was the significant gains that could be achieved through screening and early detection of this disease. In addition, workshops were held on quality improvement in each domain of colorectal cancer control.

The proceedings will be available on the Cancer Care Ontario Web site, or through Ann Kohen at ann.kohen@cancercare.on.ca or 416-971-5100 ext. 1388.

Second issue of *Insight on Cancer* to be published

Watch for the second issue of *Insight on Cancer*, a new series of publications focusing on current cancer trends, news and information. *Insight on Cancer, news and information on nutrition and cancer prevention: results from an Ontario-wide survey*, is expected later this fall. Cancer Care Ontario has partnered with the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Division to produce the series. Look for it on Cancer Care Ontario's Web site.

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