Improving the Journey for Cancer Patients

Over 6,100 patients are diagnosed with cancer annually and up to 10 times more undergo testing for suspected cancers. Many of these individuals and families dealing with a cancer diagnosis or potential cancer diagnosis find the cancer journey, from suspicion to the first treatment, is complex, difficult to understand and highly stressful. That's why Manitoba has started IN SIXTY - the Cancer Patient Journey Initiative to reduce delays, better inform patients, and hopefully reduce some of the stress associated with their journey.

The initiative team is built of strong leadership and frontline staff across many areas of health care within Manitoba including CancerCare Manitoba, Diagnostic Services of Manitoba, Regional Health Authorities, Manitoba Health, family physicians and other health care providers. This comprehensive partnership approach has a bold action plan to dramatically shorten the time from suspicion of cancer to the first treatment to 60 days or less. This will be done by focusing on what the patients need from health providers; access to the system, timely diagnosis, and to be provided appropriate care.

Vital to this work are patients. A patient group of cancer survivors and current cancer patients is working together with the health care team to ensure the patient perspective is considered and heard at every stage of the work being done. Together they will improve and enhance care during this initial stage of the cancer journey.

Cancer Journey Care Goals

The Cancer Patient Journey Initiative team will work across jurisdictions to improve cancer processes in a way that reduces suspicion to first treatment journey to 60 days or less, while improving the quality of the patient experience. Goals involved in this final outcome include:

1. Improving efficiency and quality within each care environment that a cancer patient encounters.
2. Improving effectiveness and efficiency of patient and/or patient information transitions between various health care environments.
3. Increasing the focus on the patient and relationship-centred care within the first 60 days.
4. Increasing navigation services to support and guide patients during their journey.
5. Developing tracking processes to better monitor the patient journey.
6. Connecting more cancer-focused care providers within and across geographic boundaries.
7. Enhancing existing services in rural and northern Manitoba.
8. Implementing a vulnerable patient cancer program.
9. Enhancing assessment, measurement, monitoring and reporting to support sustainability of the 60-day journey.

More about Manitoba’s Cancer Strategy

Manitoba is doing much more work on improving and enhancing services for cancer patients. To learn more, click here to view Manitoba’s Cancer strategy 2012-2017.