

**Provincial Cancer Control
Advisory Committee**

**Annual Performance Report
2018 - 2019**

Chairperson's Message

I am pleased to provide the 2018-19 Annual Performance Report for the Provincial Cancer Control Advisory Committee, in accordance with the requirements of the **Transparency and Accountability Act** for a Category 3 Government Entity. In the development of this report, consideration was given to the mandate and activities of the Advisory Committee, as communicated by the Minister responsible for this entity.

This Annual Performance Report provides an overview of the activities of the Provincial Cancer Control Advisory Committee and the extent to which planned results were met during the second fiscal period covered by the 2017-20 Activity Plan. As the Committee Chairperson, my signature below is indicative of the entire Committee's accountability for the results reported.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the commitment and dedication of the Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sharon Smith, Chairperson
Provincial Cancer Control Advisory Committee

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1.0 Overview

In June 2011, the Minister of Health and Community Services established the Provincial Cancer Control Advisory Committee (the committee). The Minister appointed the membership from a broad representation of the cancer control community throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The establishment of the committee was an early action of Gaining Ground: A Provincial Cancer Control Policy Framework for Newfoundland and Labrador (“the Framework”) released in November 2010. Policy Direction nine of the Framework: Accountability and Measuring Success, identified the creation of the committee. This policy direction committed the Provincial Government to establish a committee to advise the Minister on actions to advance and improve cancer prevention and control in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Since its establishment, the committee has fulfilled its mandate by providing advice to the Minister on cancer prevention and control issues. As part of a broader initiative to redesign the health sector, the department released the Chronic Disease Action Plan. This renewed focus on chronic illness, including cancer, is critical to the realignment of health care services. Newfoundland and Labrador continues to have some of the highest rates of chronic disease in Canada. As the age of the province’s population continues to climb, so will the prevalence of chronic diseases. Cancer registries, enhanced smoking cessation, and cancer screening programs are all specific initiatives supporting health care providers in delivering high quality person-focused care, and empowering individuals in their personal efforts towards the prevention and treatment of cancer.

Membership

In 2018-19, the committee was supported by 18 membership positions, two of which are currently vacant. These include representation from the four regional health authorities (RHAs), community organizations, Memorial University of Newfoundland, cancer survivors, volunteers, the Department of Health and Community Services (HCS), and other stakeholder groups. All members of the committee, including the Chairperson, are appointed by the Minister (Appendix A).

While the vacant positions on the committee have not been filled, the Independent Appointments Commission is recruiting individuals to fill the vacancies, with the aim to include a diverse cross-section of individuals with a broad range of expertise and qualifications to provide input on all aspects of cancer prevention and control. While there have been some applications, additional candidates are required given the size of the committee. When an adequate number of applications are received, a representative of HCS will meet with a representative from the Public Service Commission to screen applications utilizing the merit-based process.

Meetings and Expenditures

In 2018-19, the committee met two times in St. John’s: June 12, 2018, and November 21, 2018. Quorum was not achieved at the November 21, 2018 meeting. No expenses

were incurred. In general, all costs incurred by the committee are administrative, and covered by HCS.

Although financial expenditures are low, there are administrative duties associated with the committee. HCS provides necessary secretariat support including scheduling meetings, drafting and circulating agendas, preparing annual reports/activity plans, and other required tasks.

Mandate

The role of the Provincial Cancer Control Advisory Committee is:

- i. To advise the Minister on:
 - priorities for action;
 - monitoring progress; and,
 - the development of an evaluation plan for the Framework;
- ii. To liaise with the cancer control community nationally and provincially, including patients, survivors, advocates, and community organizations; and,
- iii. To identify for the Minister's consideration, additional evidence-based objectives or priority directions that have the potential to improve the control of cancer in Newfoundland and Labrador.

2.0 Highlights and Partnerships

The committee valued the support of HCS in striving to fulfil its mandate.

The committee appreciated the input of key stakeholders including, but not limited to: the Canadian Cancer Society, Young Adult Cancer Canada, the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC), Memorial University of Newfoundland, the Department of Children, Seniors, and Social Development (CSSD), the RHAs, the provincial cancer care program, community volunteers, cancer survivors, and departmental staff.

In 2018-19, the committee worked with its partners in the following ways:

- Members of the committee and its member organizations engaged in dialogue and activities supporting cancer prevention and control;
- Departmental officials shared information and sought feedback from the committee on priority cancer prevention and control actions; and,
- Members of the committee reported on cancer prevention and control efforts within their own organizations and provided expert advice and status reports on relevant initiatives including establishment of a patient panel, smoking cessation initiatives, and incorporation of cancer prevention and control resources into the provincial electronic medical record (EMR).

3.0 Report on Performance

Issue: Cancer Control

The first priority of the renewed (2019) Canadian Strategy for Cancer Control is to, “Decrease the risk of people getting cancer.” It is known that up to 4 in 10 cancer cases can be prevented, highlighting the important work of cancer control leadership nationally, and within our province.

Cancer continues to be the leading cause of death in Canada. The Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) estimates that half of Canadians are expected to develop cancer during their lifetimes, and that one 1 of 4 Canadians will die of cancer. These statistics, contained within the [2017 Canadian Cancer Statistics](#) report highlight the far-reaching impacts of cancer, as it touches most people either directly or indirectly at some point in their lives.

More than half of new cancer cases (51%) will be lung, breast, colorectal, and prostate cancer. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death, causing more cancer deaths among Canadians than the other three major cancer types combined. Despite this large impact, there has been a substantial drop in the lung cancer death rate (especially for men) over the past 25 years, which has driven a decline in the overall cancer death rate.

For 2017, CCS estimated there would be 3,850 (2,000 female and 1,850 male) new cases of cancer in Newfoundland and Labrador. The report predicted 1,550 deaths due to cancer in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2017. This province is seeing an increase in the numbers of people who are developing cancer. There are a range of possible reasons for this increase such as the aging population, increased life expectancy, high rates of risk factors (e.g., inactivity, unhealthy eating, smoking, and overuse of alcohol) and some genetic factors.

The table below illustrates distribution of cancer types by stage in Newfoundland and Labrador

Newfoundland and Labrador: Percent distribution of cancer stage by subtype, 2011-2015					
Type:	Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV	Unknown
Colorectal	22.6%	25.3%	30.5%	20.0%	1.6%
Colon	23.8%	28.0%	27.4%	19.3%	1.5%
Rectum	20.7%	19.3%	37.3%	20.7%	2.0%
Breast	50.0%	31.2%	11.9%	6.2%	0.8%
<i>Numbers may not add up due to rounding</i>					
* Source:	Canadian Cancer Statistics: A 2018 special report on cancer incidence by stage.				

In 2018-19, the committee contributed to cancer prevention and control efforts in this province by advising HCS on current issues in the cancer prevention and control environment. This advice helped inform departmental decision-making, respecting cancer prevention and control policies and programs that directly benefit the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Through the provision of advice to advance and improve cancer control efforts, the committee has addressed or made contributions towards government's strategic direction of better health for the population.

The Building on Existing Tools to Improve Chronic Disease Prevention (BETTER) program is an example of how the committee's advice and input has shaped government's policy directions. The department recognizes the priority placed upon prevention and screening of cancer, and the role this plays in reducing negative health outcomes and lowering the burden of chronic disease. As a result, the department is supporting measures to address lifestyle behaviors associated with cancer, including diet, exercise, smoking, and alcohol use. The BETTER program is an evidence-based initiative supported by CPAC that enables individuals to work one-on-one with a prevention practitioner to develop a personalized prevention prescription. HCS is supporting the implementation of BETTER in all four RHAs. Early experience using BETTER in the Corner Brook Wellness Collaborative has been extremely favourable and the program is being scaled and spread rapidly within Western Health, using Telehealth to reach more isolated communities such as Burgeo and Ramea.

The advice of the committee has also informed the design of a comprehensive, population-based screening model by the provincial cancer care program, operated by Eastern Health. The screening model has links to the provincial electronic health record, and flows data to a provincial Cancer Care Registry. The model also leverages the provincial electronic medical record using clinical decision support triggers that notify providers of the need for a particular screening test, such as cervical screening or mammography. This comprehensive approach, in combination with a robust set of eHealth tools, will enable timely preventative cancer screening and follow-up, and supports seamless care as people age and transition along the health care continuum.

The advice of the committee has reinforced the department's commitment to smoking cessation. This is an area where HCS and CSSD have partnered in cancer control. The committee's input is valuable as an important mechanism for strategizing with clinical and health system experts, and people with lived experience to determine effective approaches to smoking cessation. In the 2018-19 period, funding was made available to launch a smoking cessation program based on the Ottawa model, and to enhance access to nicotine replacement therapy within the province.

Objective: By March 31, 2019, the Cancer Control Advisory Committee will have provided advice to advance and improve cancer control efforts in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Planned for 2018-19	Actual Performance for 2018-19
Provide advice on select priority actions of the Cancer Control Policy Framework	The committee provided feedback on the provincial cancer care program's overview of their Patient and Family Advisory Council and their steps to promote the Cancer Patient Navigator Role. These are opportunities to embed the patient perspective through involvement in local, provincial, and national networks and cancer control activities.
Provide advice on emerging cancer control issues and interests	Members of the committee and member organizations engaged in select cancer control initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design of a provincial population-based screening model • Activities of a Patient and Family Cancer Advisory Council • Smoking cessation initiatives • Review and feedback on CPAC's draft discussion paper • Review and feedback on the renewed Cancer Control Strategy (released June, 2019) • Implementation and evaluation of the BETTER program • Design and establishment of a provincial cancer care registry
Provide advice on emerging issues	Members of the committee brought forward emerging cancer control issues and interests for discussion including the use of cannabis and vaping.

Discussion of Results

In the 2018-19 fiscal year, the committee discussed smoking cessation as part of the Chronic Disease Action Plan and provided insight and advice relating to healthy lifestyle initiatives. The committee and its members also examined the latest cancer statistics, and other cancer-related documents such as the renewed national strategy. In doing so, the committee met its objective by providing advice and direction on priority actions of the Policy Framework, emerging issues and interests, and by acting as an entity that monitors commitment and progress towards cancer control in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The objectives and indicators described in the Committee's 2017-20 Activity Plan will inform the committee's activities in 2019-20. Previous activity plans are published on HCS' website: www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publications.

4.0 Challenges and Opportunities

The committee expects to fulfil its mandate in 2019-20, given the Minister's support for its work. As mentioned above, in 2018-19, the committee was challenged at times to meet quorum requirements. This has been amplified by the two vacant membership positions and together these factors may challenge the committee's ability to fulfill its mandate. This in no way reflects a lack of interest or commitment to the mandate, rather

the difficulties of populating a provincial committee with defined regional membership positions within a small province.

A potential opportunity has been identified to explore overlap between the mandates of this committee and another entity operated within Eastern Health called the Cancer Services Quality Committee. If it is determined there is sufficient alignment between these two groups, and both memberships are in agreement, there may be an opportunity to reorganize the groups for most efficient and effective use of these important resources contributing to cancer control in Newfoundland and Labrador. Preliminary discussions on this topic have taken place within the committee and suggest unanimous agreement on further exploration of this opportunity.

There are a number of additional partnership opportunities and initiatives, which may support and/or direct the committee's work in the coming year:

- Monitoring and advising on drug sustainability work in the cancer care system;
- Providing input on smoking cessation activities relating to implementation of the newly funded smoking cessation program based on the Ottawa model
- Providing input on emerging cancer-related issues including vaping and cannabis
- Advising on implementation of the population-based cervical, breast, and colorectal cancer screening programs, and the potential development of a risk-based lung cancer screening program; and,
- Advising on further implementation of the BETTER program as it is scaled and spread throughout the province.

Appendix A – Committee Membership as of March 31, 2019

Representation	Full Name	Position
Chairperson	Ms. Sharon Smith	Volunteer
Member: Central Health	Mrs. Heather Brown	Vice President of Long Term Care and Community Health
Member: Eastern Health	Mrs. Elaine Warren	Vice President - Cancer Care Program
Member: Labrador-Grenfell Health	Ms. Donnie Sampson	Vice President of Labrador-Grenfell Health
Member: Western Health	Dr. Susan Gillam	Chief Executive Officer
Delegate: Faculty of Medicine, Memorial	Dr. Kara Laing	Associate Professor and Chair, Oncology
Member: Faculty of Medicine, Memorial	Vacant	(was Dean of Medicine)
Member: School of Nursing, Memorial	Dr. Anne Kearney	Associate Professor
Member: Stakeholder Representative	Mr. Matthew Piercey	Executive Director
Member: Stakeholder Representative	Mr. Geoff Eaton	Executive Director
Member: Stakeholder Representative	Mrs. Rosemary Hedderson	Volunteer
Member: Stakeholder Representative	Mrs. Margot Reid	Volunteer
Member: Health and Community Services	Mr. John Abbott	Deputy Minister
Member: Health Care Provider Representative	Vacant	Health Care Provider Representative

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