



# Experience of Care Survey Results

## Provincial Cancer Care Program

### Round 1 - 2024-2025

## Why We Surveyed

We engaged with patients of the Provincial Cancer Care Program to assess their overall experience of care. This was done through a standardized survey, which is used in jurisdictions across Canada. This allows for national comparisons and a comprehensive understanding of program strengths and areas for improvement.

## Who We Surveyed

We surveyed patients aged 18 years or older who received active cancer care treatment in an ambulatory (outpatient) setting in the past five months. A package was mailed to participants, containing information about the survey and instructions for completion. Participants were able to complete the survey virtually or on paper.

The survey received a total of 723 responses, resulting in a 37% response rate. Of survey respondents, 51% identified as men and 49% as women. Of those who responded, 4% were age 44 or younger, 30% were between age 45 and 64, 63% were between age 65 and 84, and 3% were age 85 or older. This was the first cancer diagnosis for 70% of respondents and a repeat diagnosis for 30% of respondents. Of respondents, 57% were engaged in treatment to cure their cancer, while 41% had a goal of controlling their symptoms.

## What We Heard

### What We're Doing Well

The areas patients rated most positively are highlighted below, along with examples that supported this area of strength.

#### Patients were satisfied with their overall care:

- 97% rated their overall care as good, very good, or excellent;
- 91% would completely recommend health care providers to friends and family; and
- 98% of those who had a virtual care appointment rated their virtual care as good, very good, or excellent. The top strengths of virtual care were:
  - Provider listened to what the patient had to say;
  - Patients knew who to contact if they had problems; and
  - Patients were able to discuss physical symptoms.

#### Patients felt trust in and relationship with care providers:

- 95% were treated with respect and dignity;
- 94% trusted providers with confidential information; and
- 93% believed their care providers did everything they could to treat their cancer.

#### Patients were satisfied with communication on key treatment elements:

- 94% were given clear and understandable instructions on how to take their oral medication;
- 86% felt they received enough information to manage their care at home; and
- 85% reported that their care provider completely explained why they needed tests in a way they could understand.



## Where We Can Improve

Although the findings from the survey were positive overall, there were some areas for improvement. The areas patients rated most poorly are outlined below, along with examples that supported this area of need.

### Holistic Care and Patient Wellness

- 42% were not referred to a care provider to help with anxieties and fears;
- 34% reported not receiving enough help coping with sexual health issues; and
- 31% reported not receiving enough help coping with spiritual issues.

### Empowering Patients in Decision Making About Their Care

- 37% were asked by a healthcare provider about “what treatments I would want or not want if I developed a life-threatening illness”;
- 33% were asked by a healthcare provider about “what is important to me (values, spiritual beliefs, or other practices) as I make decisions about my health care”; and
- 30% were asked by a healthcare provider about “Advance Care Planning, or if I have written documents that support my medical decisions if I cannot speak for myself”.

## Dimensions of Patient-Centred Care

The AOPSS survey tool includes questions to measure seven predefined dimensions of patient-centred care, with each dimension consisting of a set of related questions that contribute to an overall score. This score is calculated whereby the positive score represents the percentage of respondents who answered favorably (e.g., “Always”) to specific questions. The scores for this round of the AOPSS survey were.

- **Overall Satisfaction:** 97%
- **Respect for Patient Preference:** 84%
- **Physical comfort:** 78%
- **Coordination of Care:** 76%
- **Information, Education, and Communication:** 71%
- **Access to Care:** 66%
- **Emotional Support:** 56%

Survey analysis identified key drivers of patients’ overall care experience. We learned that patients have a better overall experience of care when they:

- Have enough information about changes in sexual activity;
- Receive sufficient support in coping with sexual health issues;
- Receive enough support coping with spiritual issues; and
- Are asked about Advance Care Planning.

## Next Steps

Data collection is ongoing for a second round of the survey. These results will provide a broader understanding of patient experiences with cancer care. The results will be used by the Provincial Cancer Care Program to guide program planning and develop an action plan for quality improvement.

## Learn More

For further information on this project or the outcomes, contact [natasha.elms@nlhealthservices.ca](mailto:natasha.elms@nlhealthservices.ca).

