

2026-2029

Central East Regional Cancer Program Strategic Plan

Transforming Cancer Care –
With you, for you.



Land Acknowledgement

The Central East Regional Cancer Program (CE RCP) respectfully acknowledges that its work takes place on the traditional territories of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation and across Treaty 20 Michi Saagiig Territory, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations. These include Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Rama, Beausoleil, and Georgina Island First Nations.

We recognize that the lands and waters of this region have been stewarded by Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial. Their enduring presence, knowledge systems, and teachings continue to shape the communities we serve.

As a regional cancer program, we acknowledge the ongoing impacts of colonization, including the legacy of residential schools and systemic inequities that have contributed to disparities in health outcomes for Indigenous Peoples. The right of families to live safely, to access culturally appropriate care, and to experience health and well-being without systemic barriers is fundamental. We recognize that these rights have not been equitably realized.

In the spirit of reconciliation, the CE RCP is committed to action. This includes strengthening partnerships with local Indigenous communities, engaging Elders and Knowledge Keepers, embedding Indigenous Cultural Safety in practice, and advancing health equity through the work of the Indigenous Cancer Program and broader cancer system initiatives.

We acknowledge that reconciliation requires a commitment to ongoing listening, learning, humility, and accountability. The Program is dedicated to fostering respectful relationships and to co-designing cancer care services that honour Indigenous knowledge, culture, and self-determination.

We commit to contributing to a health system that not only addresses inequities but actively works toward justice, healing, and improved outcomes for Indigenous Peoples across the CE region.

Welcome to the Central East Regional Cancer Program Strategic Plan

Cancer changes lives, but where someone lives should not determine the care they receive. Through this new strategic plan, we are strengthening a system designed not only to treat cancer, but to elevate lives and improve quality of life at every stage of the journey.

Equity in cancer care is not aspirational. It is essential.

Through our own personal journeys, we have witnessed the difference that compassionate, high-quality care can make. We share a responsibility to ensure that a positive experience is not the exception, but the standard. And we hope that through this plan, readers can easily see that our commitment is simple and unwavering: every person, regardless of who they are or where they live, deserves timely, evidence-informed cancer care close to home.

This plan builds on meaningful progress made on our previous strategic plan and sets a clear path forward. It reflects the voices of patients and families, the expertise of providers, and the dedication of community partners across our region. It is shaped by collaboration and driven by pride and anticipation: pride in what has been achieved, and in the partnerships that make progress possible; and the anticipation of how we will continue to foster a world-class cancer system.

Aligned with [Ontario Cancer Plan 6](#) (OCP 6) and the province's broader commitment to high-quality, evidence-informed cancer care, the CE RCP is one of 14 Regional Cancer Programs in the province that ensures consistent standards, shared accountability, and access to world-class expertise. It means that residents of Durham Region and throughout CE can feel confident that the care available in their own communities reflects the same excellence found anywhere in the province.

But excellence is not measured only in treatments delivered or technologies installed. It is measured in reduced travel, eased anxiety, strengthened trust, and improved quality of life. It is reflected in culturally safe programs, expanded rural access, innovative models of care, and a deep respect for lived experience. It is seen when care supports the whole person, not just the diagnosis.

The plan that follows outlines how we will continue to remove barriers, strengthen survivorship, advance equity, and deliver integrated, resilient cancer services for the people of CE region. We believe that this is more than a plan. It is a shared commitment to collaboration, to continuous improvement, and to building a system designed not only to treat cancer, but to elevate the lives of those who live it.

World-class cancer care. Close to home. Aligned across Ontario.

Kirsten Burgomaster,
Regional Vice President, CE RCP

Marc Gibbons,
Patient and Family Advisor,
Durham Regional Cancer Centre



The Central East Regional Cancer Program

The CE RCP is one of 14 Regional Cancer Programs organized by Ontario Health-Cancer Care Ontario (OH-CCO), designed to deliver equitable, high-quality cancer care to every corner of the province. These regional programs were created to bring care closer to home and ensure that services truly reflect the needs and priorities of each community.

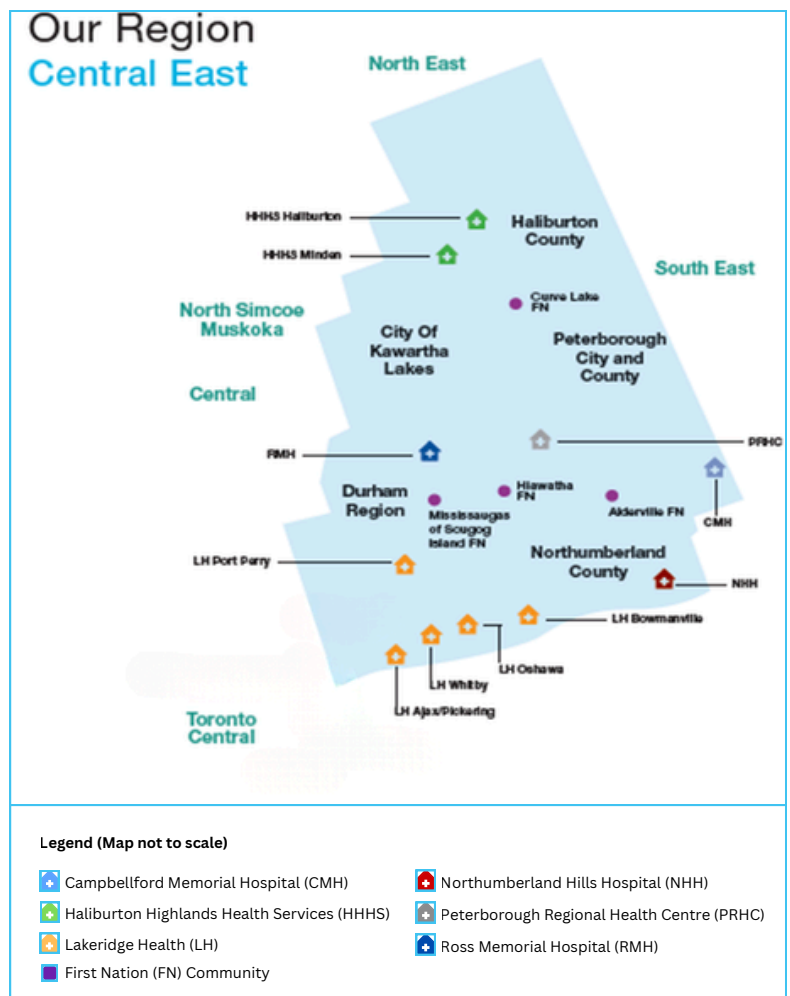


The CE RCP proudly serves as a vibrant network of cancer services and hospitals across Durham Region, Haliburton County, Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland County, and Peterborough County. Together, we support a population of approximately 1.12 million people from the fast-growing communities of Durham Region (~753,000) to the rural and cottage regions of Haliburton (~23,100), Kawartha Lakes (~85,000), Northumberland (~96,300), and Peterborough County (~167,900).

Our work is guided by the CE RCP Leadership Council, a passionate group of system leaders, clinical experts, and our Regional Vice President. This council drives collaboration across hospitals and cancer service providers, ensuring that every patient benefits from a coordinated, patient-centred approach.

Regional clinical leads play a crucial role in aligning partner organizations with provincial cancer care goals and championing measurable improvements in quality. Through their leadership, and with the support of the entire council, we develop and implement forward-thinking regional strategies that enhance access, strengthen coordination, and improve outcomes for people facing cancer across the CE region.

This regional strategic plan, co-designed with multiple stakeholders and partners, helps to guide the important work of the CE RCP to continuously improve the care we provide for the communities we serve.



Regional Engagement

Development of this Regional Strategic Plan was accomplished through a comprehensive and inclusive engagement process designed to reflect the unique needs and priorities of the communities we serve. Engagement focused on gathering diverse perspectives from across the cancer system, and ensuring that priorities were grounded in local context, performance, and lived experiences.

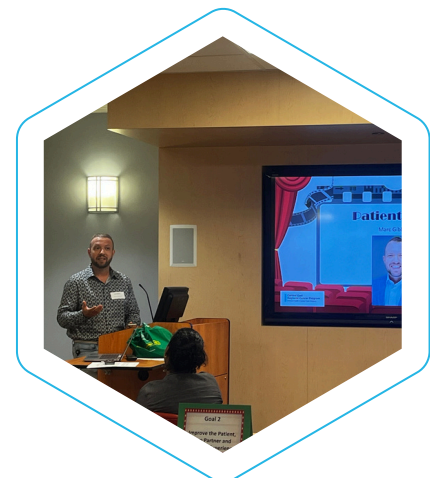
Key stakeholders that provided input into the plan include:

- The CE RCP Leadership Council to help shape the strategic direction and ensure alignment with provincial priorities.
- Four Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) within the CE RCP boundaries, including Durham OHT, Peterborough OHT, Kawartha Lakes Haliburton OHT, and Northumberland OHT, to provide valuable insights into local health system challenges, opportunities for integration and collaboration to improve the cancer journey across primary care, hospital, and community settings.
- Multiple Patient, Family, and Community Advisory Committees to identify gaps in care, barriers to access, and opportunities to further strengthen person-centered approaches across cancer services.
- A diverse group of healthcare professionals practicing in areas such as primary care, palliative care, oncology, surgery, leadership and administration to ensure that this plan reflects local needs and opportunities and is aligned with local resources and planning.
- Key Ontario Health leaders to highlight provincial cancer care priorities and to emphasize how the CE RCP can move these priorities forward.
- The Indigenous Cancer Program to provide insight regarding how to best align priorities with the CE Regional Indigenous Cancer Plan (RICP) and to embed Indigenous perspectives throughout the plan.

In parallel, a comprehensive review of current data was undertaken. This data-driven approach ensured the plan is grounded in evidence and responsive to population health needs. Data reviews included:

- Regional performance and quality metrics.
- Screening, diagnosis, and treatment data.
- Local demographic trends and community health indicators.

To support accountability and continuous improvement, feedback loops were embedded throughout the planning process. Regular touchpoints with key stakeholder groups were used to validate emerging priorities, refine proposed strategies, and ensure that the plan remained responsive as it evolved. This integrated engagement and data informed approach resulted in a Regional Strategic Plan that balances evidence, lived experiences and system priorities, positioning the region to advance high-quality, equitable cancer care for all communities.



Network and Services: Our Regional Partners

- Campbellford Memorial Hospital (CMH)
- Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS)
- Lakeridge Health (LH)
- Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH)
- Peterborough Regional Health Centre (PRHC)
- Ross Memorial Hospital (RMH)



Most individuals will have an encounter with cancer in their lifetime either by supporting a family member, friend, or through a personal experience. According to the Ontario cancer statistics, about 1 out of every 2 Ontarians will develop cancer in their lifetime. On a positive note, Ontario has among the highest cancer survival rates in the world. In CE, we recognize a person's cancer journey touches so many lives along the way and one's experience is influenced by the care they receive. High quality cancer service delivery is dependent on the strength of the interconnection and interdependence of all providers across the network.

The CE RCP is home to one regional cancer centre, the Durham Regional Cancer Centre (DRCC) at LH in Oshawa, two peripheral cancer care clinics at NHH and PRHC, a satellite clinic at RMH for Radiation Oncology consults and follow-up appointments, and includes six partner hospital systems where surgical treatment and/or cancer screening services are provided.

The expansive network that makes up the CE RCP also includes clinics, independent health facilities, First Nation Health Centres, urban Indigenous organizations, home and community care teams, public health units and family health teams.

As an RCP, we work with a full range of service providers and multi-disciplinary team members to deliver cancer care. We also work closely with other cancer programs, agencies and health service providers across Ontario linking specialized services both regionally and provincially.

Network and Services: Our Regional Partners



**Campbellford
Memorial Hospital**
Our Best. Every Day.

Campbellford Memorial Hospital

CMH partners with PRHC in providing palliative services and treatment for the 40,000 residents of Campbellford, Peterborough County, Hastings County and surrounding areas.

Although CMH does not have treatment services such as chemotherapy and radiation, CMH has been proactive in ensuring that inpatients receive high-quality standardized palliative care, including an on-site palliative physician and Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) procedures as close to home as possible.

CMH led the Trent Hills Palliative Collaboration, which includes partners Community Care Northumberland, East Region Home & Community Care, long-term care facilities and Bridge Hospice. The multidisciplinary team has achieved five objectives: continuing to enhance current education health care providers and community members; a common referral form; direct admission for patients who present to our Emergency Department; an order set for palliative patients; and patient and family education material.

www.cmh.ca



Network and Services: Our Regional Partners



Haliburton Highlands Health Services

HHHS offers Hospital, Long Term Care and Community Support Services to our community. Our compassionate teams, throughout the organization, are ready to collaborate with and support individuals through their cancer journey.

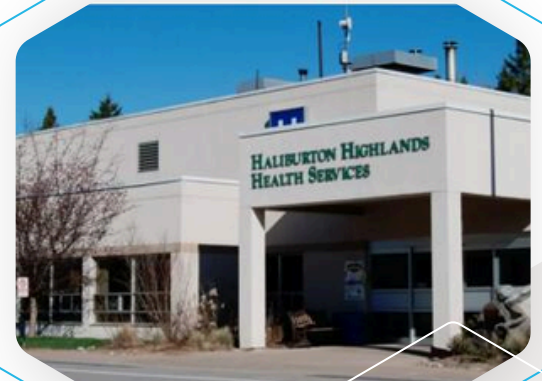
HHHS strives to be a leader in innovative rural healthcare and works collaboratively with community and regional partners to bring care closer to home. HHHS proactively identifies, evaluates and considers opportunities to optimize technology to enhance services available to our community.

Although HHHS does not offer treatment services such as chemotherapy or radiation, a Gynecology Clinic recently opened expanding cancer screening opportunities and, as of 2026, the Ontario Lung Screening Program (OLSP) and Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP) are being actively explored with the additions of CT and Mammography.

HHHS has a very active Hospice and Palliative Care Community Teams who work with individuals with cancer, regardless of their goals of care.

Services these teams provide include information sharing, education, support, working with individual's care team to support them in achieving their health goals in all of our care settings and individual's homes. Grief support is also provided through these teams, helping families navigate their path forward following a loss.

www.hhhs.ca



Network and Services: Our Regional Partners

R. S. McLaughlin Durham Regional Cancer Centre (DRCC) at Lakeridge Health

The DRCC is located at LH in Oshawa. Our goal is to deliver high quality, safe care while continuously seeking opportunities to further develop provincial and local cancer care. Patients are partners in their care alongside an interprofessional team dedicated to providing support through the entire journey. The DRCC provides a full range of cancer care services including diagnosis, treatment, psychosocial oncology, palliative care, and survivorship. Oncologists at the DRCC also practice at partner hospitals in our region supporting high-quality cancer care services closer to home for patients and families.

LH is one of Ontario's most comprehensive health systems, with five hospitals, four emergency departments, three critical care units, a long-term care home, a state-of-the-art community-based surgical centre, and more than 30 community-based locations delivering acute, ambulatory, and long-term care. We are home to leading regional programs in cancer care, mental health, chronic kidney disease services, and critical care.

Through transformative research, dynamic academic partnerships, and over 160 active clinical studies, we are advancing medical knowledge and training the next generation of providers through the Queen's–LH MD Family Medicine Program and the LHEARN Network.

Supported by nearly 9,000 staff, physicians, and volunteers, and working in collaboration with the Durham OHT and community partners, we are committed to building an integrated system of care and empowering people across Durham Region to live their best health.

www.lh.ca



Lakeridge
Health

R. S. McLaughlin Durham Regional Cancer Centre



Network and Services: Our Regional Partners



Northumberland Hills Hospital

Through the stated mission, “Exceptional patient care. Every time”, NHH aspires to be both a leader and a partner in creating health care excellence.

The health care team in NHH’s Cobourg Lions and Lioness Cancer and Supportive Care Clinic provides care for cancer patients living in the surrounding communities in partnership with the DRCC.

Services offered at NHH include the delivery of chemotherapy, biotherapy and supportive treatments, as well as education, palliative care, symptom and pain management.

NHH respectfully supports clinic patients and their families through all stages, from diagnosis, treatment, follow up, palliative care and survivorship.

Patients benefit from the expertise of the many health care professionals at NHH in addition to visiting specialists with expertise in oncology, hematology and radiation oncology. The Cancer Clinic team is committed to providing exceptional patient care, close to home.

www.nhh.ca



Network and Services: Our Regional Partners



Peterborough Regional Health Centre

PRHC Cancer Care Clinic is part of the CE RCP. We are a centre of excellence serving more than 100,000 families in Peterborough and the surrounding area.

PRHC works to ensure our patients receive the highest standard of cancer care. All patients receive care guided by best practice standards of OH-CCO. These practices have been shown to provide the best patient outcomes.

At PRHC, the Cancer Care team provides Medical, Radiation and Hematology Oncology support to patients. The interprofessional approach offers a full spectrum of cancer services, from diagnosis, through to treatment, survivorship and end-of-life care.

The program works in partnership with the DRCC in an effort to provide cancer services closer to home. In collaboration with health care partners, PRHC treats breast cancer (male and female), gastrointestinal cancer (esophagus, stomach, colon, rectum, liver and pancreas), genitourinary cancer (prostate, testis, kidney and bladder), gynaecological cancer (ovaries, cervix, uterus and vulva), hematology (lymphomas), melanoma, skin cancer and thoracic cancer (lung and chest).

At PRHC, the goal is to leverage the expertise, talent, research and knowledge within the cancer care program to enhance quality of care and the patient experience.

www.prhc.on.ca



Network and Services: Our Regional Partners

Ross Memorial Hospital

RMH's vision, "Exceptional Care – Together," involves working closely with health system partners, such as the DRCC.

Cancer services at the hospital in Lindsay include OBSP; mammography; ultrasound biopsies; high-risk breast Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scans and biopsies; endoscopy and colposcopy; breast and bowel surgery, including minimally invasive colorectal surgery; surgical pathology services; and the palliative pain and symptom management clinic.

RMH works with the DRCC to offer a radiation oncology clinic so patients can see an oncologist for pre- and post-treatment visits in their own community.

www.rmh.org



ROSS MEMORIAL
HOSPITAL
Kawartha Lakes



Central East Indigenous Cancer Plan

Through a collaborative partnership with OH-CCO, the CE RCP Indigenous Cancer Program has developed the RICP. This Plan is designed to improve cancer service delivery for First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban Indigenous (FNIMUI) people, and was collaboratively developed with Indigenous communities and organizations in the region.

The Plan builds on the framework of OCP 6; the fifth FNIMIU Cancer Strategy 2024-2028; the vision, values and goals of the CE RCP; and most importantly, direction on cancer care priorities from Indigenous partners and Community members in the region. This provided the necessary foundation to develop a CE RICP with Indigenous peoples that is truly impactful, respectful and sustainable.

The RICP outlines the commitments of the CE RCP, aligns these with the strategic priorities detailed in the fifth Indigenous Strategy, and identifies regional deliverables for the CE RCP. It also describes the anticipated impact of these deliverables for Indigenous communities across the region. The CE RICP highlights opportunities for mutual support and codesign that will strengthen Ontario's cancer services and improve the experience of Indigenous peoples across all phases of the cancer journey.



The Central East Indigenous Cancer Plan focuses on:

Building Productive Relationships:

✓ Build and promote relationships with Indigenous partners.

Measurement, Monitoring, and Evaluation:

✓ Compile and develop information to improve the quality of the cancer experience for patients, families, and healthcare providers.

Prevention and Well-being:

✓ Continue to work with Elders and Knowledge Keepers to guide culturally-based approaches to reduce rates of cancer and chronic disease.

Screening:

✓ Increase participation in cancer screening among Indigenous peoples across the province.

Palliative and End-of-Life Care:

✓ Improve pathways for patients and families that include enhanced access to palliative care supports.

Survivorship:

✓ Enhance awareness of survivorship, ensuring survivors are supported after treatment and connected to available on-going supports.

Education:

✓ Increase the knowledge and awareness for healthcare providers to enhance and support Indigenous patients' experience.

Equitable Access:

✓ Reduce barriers in the health system and service delivery.

Our Priorities

Our region stands at a pivotal moment in cancer care. Together, we are ready to build a cancer system that delivers even more exceptional care for every person, in every community we serve. Progress will require unwavering commitment, bold innovation, and deep collaboration across our hospital, community, and provider partners.

This Regional Cancer Plan outlines the strategic direction that will guide our collective efforts over the coming years. Grounded in equity, integration, quality and sustainability, our plan focuses on five interconnected goals that reflect both provincial priorities and the unique needs of our region.



- Goal #1: Advance Equity in the Cancer System
- Goal #2: Improve the Patient, Care Partner and Provider Experience
- Goal #3: Achieve Seamless and Effective Integration of All Cancer Services
- Goal #4: Improve Cancer Outcomes and Quality of Life for Ontarians
- Goal #5: Ensure Sustainable Cancer System Infrastructure and Workforce

5 Priorities



Advance
Equity



Improve
Experience



Integrate
Effectively



Improve
Outcomes



Ensure
Sustainable
Infrastructure

Goal 1: Advance Equity in the Cancer System



The CE region of Ontario is a vibrant mosaic of communities, encompassing urban centres, remote rural areas, and a rich diversity of cultures, ethnicities, and Indigenous populations. This diversity is a strength, and a call to action. Advancing equity in the cancer system requires recognizing and addressing the distinct barriers experienced across the region, from people living in isolated rural communities to newcomers navigating care in a new country, and Indigenous communities seeking culturally safe and trauma-informed supports.

Aligned with OCP 6, this goal commits to dismantling systemic inequities and ensuring that every person, regardless of geography, identity, or background, can access timely, effective, and compassionate cancer care. This requires collaboration, data-driven insight, and authentic engagement with communities that have historically been underserved or excluded.

The CE RCP is already a provincial leader in advancing equity in cancer care having received multiple awards in Equity and Indigenous Health from a variety of sources such as [The Cancer Quality Council of Ontario](#). The Regional Strategic Plan builds on that strong foundation, advancing a health system in which services are co-designed with communities, data informs inclusive planning, and culturally responsive care is not an aspiration but a standard.

Provincial Strategic Objectives:

- Address barriers to improving equitable access to effective cancer treatments.
- Improve equitable cancer planning and care delivery by collecting and using sociodemographic data.
- Strengthen the cancer system by advancing equity, inclusion, diversity and anti-racism and embedding culturally responsive, trauma-informed, person-centered care.
- Address disparities in the cancer system by co-designing policies and programs and building trusting and reciprocal relationships with FNIMUI peoples, Black Ontarians and underserved populations.
- Implement the fifth FNIMUI Cancer strategy with ongoing engagement from FNIMUI leadership, their health teams, and communities.

Regional Priority:

- Identify and address health equity gaps to reduce disparities in access to cancer services.

Regional Opportunities by 2029:

- Improve access to culturally safe care including psychosocial support and multilingual services.
- Enhance cancer services in remote communities of the region, by co-designing with affected communities.
- Leverage available data to identify and understand barriers to accessing cancer services.

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Goal 1: Advance Equity in the Cancer System



Patient Story: Traditional Medicine Clinics: Bringing Healing Closer to Home

The Traditional Medicine Clinic at the DRCC has transformed cancer care for Indigenous patients by providing culturally meaningful access to a safe, private space for ceremony, traditional medicines, and a Traditional Healer. Patients have shared that this clinic helps address their spiritual needs, filling a critical gap in their cancer care experience long sought by many individuals.

Patients describe the clinics as spaces where they feel welcomed, respected, and understood. One patient shared: “I have found as I go through my healing process that Robert (Traditional Healer) and Kathy (Indigenous Navigator) have really helped lift me up spiritually through ceremony and sharing circles. With the inclusion of this clinic, the cancer centre has broadened its care to include Indigenous approaches to spiritual and emotional well-being. This has given me the strength I needed to get me through a very difficult time in my life as I process my journey down the red road.”

Maralynn Cherry, a patient of the cancer centre since 2015, shared that “I was introduced to Kathy MacLeod-Beaver through her sharing circles at Hearth Place. Since then, the Indigenous Cancer team introduced the Traditional Medicine Clinic and Traditional Healer, Robert. As a result, LH has expanded its physical care with inner psychological and spiritual wellbeing of patients. I highly commend and admire how the DRCC has created such necessary enhanced care.”

By blending traditional healing alongside modern cancer treatment, these clinics promote holistic wellness, reduce anxiety, and foster trust through culturally safe care.

Goal 1: Advance Equity in the Cancer System



Patient Story: From distance to access: Transforming women's health services in the Haliburton Highlands

HHHS is committed to improving access to women's health services, ensuring better health outcomes and a stronger continuum of care for individuals living in and around the Haliburton Highlands.

"We know that women across northern and rural Ontario often face long wait times or must travel great distances to receive care," said Dr. Mark, a physician at the Women's Health Clinic. "Our goal is to reduce those barriers by providing compassionate, comprehensive care right here, so our patients can get the help they need in their own community."

Individuals living as far away as Dorset have received care in the Women's Health Clinic, drawn by both its accessibility and its commitment to person-centered care. Patient experience feedback reflects on the efficiency of the clinic's scheduling and ability to provide same-day procedures, such as colposcopies, during initial consultations.

In their efforts to support individuals with better access to preventative screening, the Women's Health Clinic offered Human Papillomavirus (HPV) testing at two events in 2025. "Having this kind of specialized care close to home means so much to our patients," said Interim President and CEO Jennifer Burns West. "It's another example of how we're working to strengthen access to healthcare in the Highlands, helping our residents stay healthy, supported, and connected to care within their own community."

The Women's Health Clinic continues to grow as part of HHHS's commitment to bringing care closer to home, reducing the need for travel, and ensuring that every individual receives timely, high-quality, person-centred care.

Goal 2: Improve the Patient, Care Partner, and Provider Experience



Cancer is not experienced in isolation. Every patient's journey is shaped by the support of their care partners and the dedication of their healthcare providers. When the voices of patients, care partners, and providers are heard, supported, and valued, the result extends beyond improved experiences leading to better outcomes, smoother transitions, and a more resilient and sustainable cancer system.

The CE RCP is founded in a cancer care environment grounded in compassion, communication, and coordination. This includes ensuring that patients and their care partners have access to psychosocial and symptom management supports across the cancer continuum, from diagnosis through survivorship and palliative care, while also equipping providers with the tools, time, and team-based models they need to thrive.

By strengthening these interconnected experiences, we are improving a system that not only treats cancer but also supports the human experience of care.

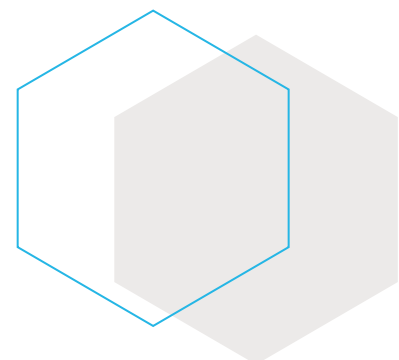
Provincial Strategic Objectives:

- Implement a comprehensive model of care in hospital and community for patients and care partners to access psychosocial, symptom and side-effect management, throughout the care continuum.
- Establish integrated survivorship services to improve the patient and care partner experience.
- Implement the recommendations in the Palliative Care Health Services Delivery Framework for patients and their care partners in hospital and community settings.
- Promote provider well-being through measurement and integration of best practices.

Regional Priority: Strengthen coordination at key care transitions across the continuum, with integrated support for care partners.

Regional Opportunities by 2029:

- Enhance patient supports at key care transitions (e.g., diagnosis, palliative, survivorship, etc.) including integration of mental health services across the cancer continuum.
- Strengthen awareness of community care partners' supports including education, respite, and mental health resources.
- Support Primary Care Providers with timely post treatment guidance and resources.
- Promote provider well-being and resilience through supportive, team-based care models.



Goal 2: Improve the Patient, Care Partner, and Provider Experience



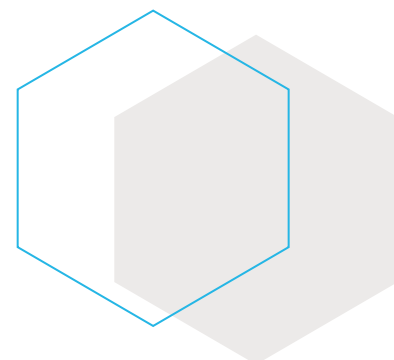
Patient Story: Improving the Patient and Care Partner Experience Through Local Access to Cancer Treatment

Well into my journey of being a patient with Multiple Myeloma, it was recommended I receive cutting-edge treatment, Bispecific T-cell Engager Therapy (BITE). To receive this BITE therapy, I had to travel over 360 kms a week to Kingston. This was in the winter months making it extra challenging and stressful, especially on my wife who was doing all the driving. At first, I was so grateful to learn that I could receive this treatment, but the constant travelling was wearing me and my wife down.

I requested I be offered treatment at PRHC, my home cancer centre but I learned that this type of treatment wasn't available locally. Together with the PRHC Cancer Care team, we advocated bringing this BITE therapy to PRHC Cancer Care. This set into motion the team expediting various processes including education, to ensure the treatment plan was properly and safely set up to meet my needs and now other future patient needs.

In total, it took about 8 to 10 weeks to get it set up at PRHC and it has made a world of difference not having to drive to Kingston. I was just thinking of how grateful I am for this local access to treatment as we are soon approaching winter months again. Not having the additional concern about lengthy drives on winter roads, eases a lot of additional stress on me and my wife.

-Graham Campbell



Goal 3: Achieve Seamless and Effective Integration of All Cancer Services



The CE region has a strong legacy of collaboration across hospitals, community organizations, primary care, Indigenous and culturally diverse partners. This spirit of partnership provides the foundation for seamless and effective integration of cancer services. As cancer journeys become increasingly complex, patients, care partners, and providers need a system that moves with them; one that is coordinated, connected, and responsive at every step.

This regional goal focuses on strengthening integration across the entire cancer continuum, from screening and diagnosis through treatment, survivorship, and palliative care. Integration goes beyond linking services. It means ensuring that patients and care partners can navigate the system with confidence, providers have timely access to information, and transitions between care settings are seamless and well supported.

By 2029, the CE RCP will build on its collaborative strengths and leverage digital innovations to create a cancer system that is not only integrated, but intuitive; where care is coordinated, information flows seamlessly, and patients and care partners feel well supported throughout their journey.

Provincial Strategic Objectives:

- Leverage digital solutions to support coordination of care, access to comprehensive health information and system navigation for patients, their care partners and providers.
- Establish integrated diagnostic services supported by navigation and access to information to improve timely diagnosis and patient outcomes.
- Strengthen integrated community and home support models for patients and their care partners.

Regional Priority: Strengthen integrated cancer care through collaboration, navigation support, and technology-enabled coordination.

Regional Opportunities by 2029:

- Leverage digital tools to connect patients and health care providers with timely local support.
- Enhance patient and care partner awareness of available community support services across the region.
- Implement standardized care pathways to strengthen transitions across the cancer continuum, from screening through treatment, survivorship, and palliative care.

Goal 3: Achieve Seamless and Effective Integration of All Cancer Services



More than treatment: Joan's Story of Integrated Cancer Care

Joan, a retired Developmental Services Worker, was referred to NHH following her initial breast cancer treatment at the DRCC. Her care journey, from diagnosis through treatment and symptom management, reflects the CE RCP's commitment to seamless, integrated cancer care.

At NHH, Joan's treatment plan was developed with careful consideration of her pre-existing conditions. Supported by clear care pathways and strong communication across providers, this coordinated approach ensured continuity, safety, and responsiveness throughout her cancer journey.

During one appointment, a nurse identified significant bruising and inflammation in Joan's right arm. Timely access to a compression sleeve helped manage the swelling in her arm. Joan later learned that the Ontario Assistive Devices Program could have reduced the cost of the sleeve. As she reflected, "Probably the information was given to me, but it's often difficult to keep track of everything unless it's written down." Better coordination between hospital and community partners would have enabled Joan access to the needed funding for the compression sleeve. This experience highlights the importance of integrated, consistent, and coordinated communication across services, ensuring patients not only receive information, but understand it well enough to act on it. Expanded use of digital tools could further support patient understanding and enhance the overall care experience.

Joan particularly valued the integration of symptom management, especially pain management, and the person-centred approach to her care. She also identified opportunities to strengthen integration beyond treatment by better connecting psychosocial supports, rehabilitation, and occupational therapy. Improving the visibility and coordination of these services would enable patients to more effectively access the full range of hospital and community-based supports available to them.

Goal 4: Improve Cancer Outcomes and Quality of Life for Ontarians



Improving cancer outcomes and enhancing quality of life is not just a goal, it is a promise to every Ontarian affected by cancer. In the CE region, this promise is driven by a spirit of innovation, collaboration, and continuous learning. From research to quality improvement initiatives, we are committed to transforming care through evidence-informed practices and innovative approaches.

We recognize that better outcomes begin with prevention, early detection, and timely diagnosis. High-quality, person-centered care that responds to the diverse needs of our communities ensures that these outcomes continue to flourish. Innovation extends beyond technology. It encompasses new models of care, data-driven decision-making, and a culture that embraces learning and continuous improvement.

By 2029, the CE RCP will further its position as a recognized leader in cancer care transformation where prevention is prioritized, screening is equitable, treatment is integrated, and every person's cancer journey is supported with compassion and precision. This is a system built not only to treat cancer, but to elevate the lives of those who live with it.

Provincial Strategic Objectives:

- Advance system-level approaches to promote health and well-being, improve disease outcomes and reduce risk factors relevant to cancer and other chronic diseases.
- Evolve the design and delivery of Ontario's organized cancer screening programs to improve access and increase participation.
- Drive safe, high-quality care to improve outcomes, survival and quality of life through best practice adoption and continuous quality improvement.
- Integrate data and new evidence, leveraging health services research, into practice and policy recommendations.
- Implement a streamlined approach for timely adoption of innovation and technologies.

Regional Priority: Transform the regional cancer system through collaboration and innovation to provide equitable, evidence-based, person-centered care and improve outcomes and quality of life for all residents of the CE who are affected by cancer.

Regional Opportunities by 2029:

- Strengthen prevention and health promotion strategies to reduce risk factors for cancer and other chronic diseases.
- Increase equitable participation in organized cancer screening programs.
- Accelerate timely and accurate diagnosis through innovation.
- Deliver high-quality, integrated, and evidence-informed treatment across the cancer continuum.
- Enhance support for young adults and other populations with unique psychosocial and clinical needs.
- Leverage data and evidence to inform decision-making and drive continuous improvement.

Goal 4: Improve Cancer Outcomes and Quality of Life for Ontarians



Kate Winn's Story: Finding Hope and Healing at the Ross

During the pandemic, Kate Winn heard the words no one ever wants to hear: You have breast cancer. In that moment, everything changed. Her plans, her priorities, and her perspective.

But what followed was a story of hope. Surrounded by her family, friends, and the compassionate team at RMH, Kate began her cancer journey determined to find her way back to health.

“When undergoing testing and treatment for breast cancer, RMH became a frequent destination for me,” says Kate. “It’s hard to put into words the importance of having such excellent and timely care, from diagnosis through surgery and beyond, so close to home.”

One of the key steps in her treatment was an MRI scan, which gave her medical team a clear, detailed view of her tumour and confirmed that there were no others.

“Within a short period of time my medical team utilized mammogram, ultrasounds, biopsy, and MRI to diagnose my tumour and determine the extent of my disease to make treatment decisions,” says Kate. “As a teacher, I’ve always believed that the best stories are full of detail. When it comes to cancer care, those details save lives. The MRI gave my doctors the complete picture they needed to help me heal.”

Today, Kate is cancer-free and grateful for her health, for her family’s support, and for the exceptional team that cared for her close to home.

“I’m thankful every day for the care I received, for my good outcome, and for the chance to live a healthy life again,” she said. “The Ross helped me through one of the hardest chapters of my life and I can now look forward to all the chapters still to come.”

Goal 5: Ensure Sustainable Cancer System Infrastructure and Workforce



The CE region is growing and changing. With a rapidly increasing and aging population, shifting demographics, and rising cancer incidence, the demand for cancer services is intensifying. To meet these evolving needs, we must take a future-ready, system-wide approach to sustainability. This includes strengthening infrastructure, expanding workforce capacity, and ensuring care is delivered efficiently, equitably, and close to home.

We are committed to enhancing a cancer system that is resilient, scalable, and responsive. This requires aligning capital investments, workforce planning, and service delivery so that every person, regardless of where they live or who they are, can access timely, high-quality care. It also involves empowering healthcare teams to work to their full scope across oncology, primary care, and palliative services, and embracing innovative models of care.

By 2029, the CE RCP will strengthen its future-ready cancer system, building on today's leadership. The region's cancer system will anticipate demand, support providers, and deliver sustainable, person-centered care across the continuum.

Provincial Strategic Objectives:

- Develop and implement comprehensive and scalable health human resources and infrastructure strategies.
- Implement the ambulatory systemic treatment models of care recommendations to optimize service delivery for oncology providers and patients.

Regional Priority: Align capital, workforce, and service planning to optimize sustainable cancer system capacity.

Regional Opportunities by 2029:

- Optimize cancer services to align care with the most appropriate providers and settings.
- Strengthen team-based care to ensure providers work to their full scope across the continuum maximizing system capacity.
- Promote careers in cancer care through high school and college engagement.
- Coordinate regional strategies for capital equipment planning to support sustainable, efficient service delivery.

Goal 5: Ensure Sustainable Cancer System Infrastructure and Workforce



Provider Story: Preparing Our Regional Cancer Program for the Next Decade

“Our cancer care system faces two key challenges over the next 5-10 years when the number of people living with cancer in our region will significantly increase. The first is the growth and aging of the population and the second is the rapid development of more effective treatments that improve life expectancy as well as quality of life.

The CE RCP must be able to meet the demands of our population by continuing to deliver world standard treatments in a timely fashion to those in need across our region.

To achieve these goals, we must continue to optimize our existing partnerships between care providers and develop the capacity needed to deliver state-of-the-art specialized treatments including surgery, systemic treatment and radiotherapy.

Equally important is the need to invest in cancer diagnosis, that is, diagnostic imaging and pathology. Our pathologists are now able to identify specific features of each person’s tumour thus allowing the selection of individualized systemic treatments, leading to significantly improved outcomes.

We must demonstrate flexibility in delivering newly developed treatments as they become available for general application so that we can continue to deliver the best treatments that are available anywhere in Canada.”

- Dr. Peter Dixon: CE RCP Leader since 2001 in various roles, including the inaugural Regional Vice President.

Conclusion

The CE RCP Strategic Cancer Plan reflects the shared commitment of patients, communities, healthcare providers, partners, and leaders across the CE region to deliver high quality, equitable, and person-centred cancer care.

Grounded in lived experience, informed by data, and guided by strong partnerships, the CE RCP will continue to advance a cancer system that is responsive, compassionate, and integrated across the continuum of care.

As we move forward to 2029, we do so with a clear sense of purpose and accountability, working together to transform experiences, improve outcomes, and ensure every person affected by cancer receives compassionate, high-quality care when and where they need it most, at every stage of their journey.

Transforming Cancer Care –
With you, for you.



Regional Clinical Leads



Patti Argier - Psychosocial Oncology Lead



Debbie Devitt - Patient Experience & Patient Education Lead



Dr. Orit Freedman - Systemic Therapy Lead



Dr. Hugh Kendall - Endoscopy & Colorectal Screening Lead



Dr. Katie O'Reilly - Pathology & Laboratory Medicine Lead



Dr. Rebecca Wray - Regional Primary Care Lead



Dr. Joel Broomfield - Indigenous Cancer Lead



Dr. Julie Francis - Cervical Screening & Colposcopy Lead



Dr. Julia Jones - Surgical Oncology Lead



Darrilyn Lessels - Nursing Lead



Dr. Rola Shaheen - Breast & Cancer Imaging Lead

Meet Our Team

