

CANCER *talk* for Primary Care

› YOUR SOURCE FOR UP-TO-DATE CANCER CARE INFORMATION

› NEW COORDINATOR TO JOIN THE CANCERCARE MANITOBA PAUL ALBRECHTSEN CENTRE FOR HOPE IN BRANDON



We are pleased to share that **Janet Schonewille** has accepted a full-time, term Coordinator position at the CancerCare Manitoba (CCMB), Paul

Albrechtsen Centre for Hope in Brandon, Manitoba. She will start in this two-year term on Monday, February 23 and will be working out of the Centre located in the Western Manitoba Cancer Centre.

As the Coordinator, Janet will primarily be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Centre and the development, delivery, promotion and evaluation of information, education, support and wellness programming. Initially, she will be conducting a needs assessment to guide development of Hope & Healing programming for patients and families living with cancer in Brandon and the Prairie Mountain Health Region.

Cancer Day for Primary Care is back on May 8, 2026!

See page 3 for more details and how to register.

Message from the President & CEO

Read more on Page 2.

BreastCheck Practice Change

Breast cancer screening age of availability update on page 4.

Advanced Cancer Model of Care Project

Collaboration and learning opportunities on page 6

If you have questions regarding the work-up of suspected cancer or any other cancer-related questions, contact the CancerQuestion Helpline for Healthcare Professionals, Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Call 204-226-2262.

Message from the President and CEO



I am pleased to share this message with Manitoba's primary care community in this edition of *CancerTalk*. Returning to Manitoba feels like a full-circle moment for me, both professionally and personally.

In early 2025, I was in Winnipeg supporting the Max Rady Faculty of Health Sciences during their accreditation process in my role as Vice Dean Education at the University of Saskatchewan. During that visit, I learned that CancerCare Manitoba would soon be recruiting a new CEO and was encouraged to consider applying. It was one of those unexpected opportunities that immediately felt right.

My wife and I have very positive memories of our time living here, the strong sense of community, the people, and, for me, the early years of my career as a pediatric oncologist at CCMB. Returning now in a leadership role is both meaningful and energizing.

What drew me back, and what continues to inspire me, is the people. CancerCare Manitoba is home to dedicated, skilled professionals who care deeply about their work and the patients they serve. I am motivated by the opportunity to support teams, bring people together, and create

the conditions for everyone to do their best work. When our teams feel supported and empowered, patients benefit. That is what matters most.

Primary care providers are essential partners in this work. Your role in prevention, early detection, treatment, and ongoing care is critical to delivering high-quality, comprehensive cancer services for Manitobans. You are a key part of our collective strength.

Looking ahead, there is much to be excited about. Renovations are underway to expand capacity in both clinical and non-clinical areas as we plan for a future facility. The research laboratory rebuild is progressing, and collaboration with partners continues to shape what comes next. While these developments are important, what stands out most to me is the dedication of the people behind the work. It is something I have already seen and deeply value.

I look forward to reconnecting with those I already know and meeting many more of you in the primary care community. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to Manitobans affected by cancer and for the partnership we share in delivering care. Together, we can continue to strengthen our impact and improve outcomes for those we serve.

Cancer Day for Primary Care 2026

INVITATION



Cancer Day for Primary Care 2026

May 8, 2026 | Hybrid | 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

University of Manitoba, Bannatyne Campus, Basic Medical Sciences Building, Theatre C, or via Zoom

Reasons to consider:

- **Provider-Driven:** Content based on primary care feedback for maximum relevance.
- **Practical Insights:** Actionable, evidence-based strategies for everyday practice.
- **Case-Based Learning:** Discuss your own real-world cases with local specialists.
- **Specialist Access:** Direct dialogue with Manitoba oncologists and surgeons to improve referrals.

Register Now



 **CancerCare Manitoba**
ActionCancerManitoba

BreastCheck Practice Change

**BreastCheck**

PRACTICE CHANGE

Breast Cancer Screening Age of Eligibility

Effective: December 2025

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

BreastCheck is CancerCare Manitoba's provincial breast cancer screening program. BreastCheck has invited eligible people aged 50-74 to participate in breast cancer screening, provided screening mammograms to patients aged 50 and older, and referred patients to follow-up testing when required.

CHANGE IN PROCEDURE

BreastCheck is now accepting breast cancer screening appointments for people aged 45-49. Asymptomatic, average-risk people aged 45 and over can self-refer to BreastCheck by calling 1-855-952-4325.

The potential benefits and potential harms of breast cancer screening are different for people aged 45-49 compared to older patients. We encourage healthcare providers to have informed decision-making conversations with their patients to help them decide whether screening is right for them.

PATIENT IMPROVEMENTS:

- Eligible patients aged 45-49 can now participate in breast cancer screening at BreastCheck.
- Patients aged 45 and over can self-refer to BreastCheck. No healthcare provider referral is required.
- Screening mammograms can find breast cancer early, when there may be more treatment options and a better chance of a cure.

SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS:

- It is less expensive and potentially easier to treat breast cancers that are found at earlier stages.
- BreastCheck will be increasing capacity for breast cancer screening by adding mammogram appointments, screening locations, and equipment.
- Breast cancer diagnostic and treatment services will be added in the future to support the downstream impact of increased breast cancer screening.

FORMS AND SUPPORTING RESOURCES:

Visit cancercare.mb.ca/screening/hcp for the new breast cancer screening guidelines and other resources.

MORE INFORMATION:

For more information, contact BreastCheck at 1-855-952-4325 or visit cancercare.mb.ca/screening/hcp.

CLINICAL PRACTICE CHANGE ISSUED BY:

Dr. Arbind Dubey, Vice President, Medical Services and Chief Medical Officer, CancerCare Manitoba
Dr. Aleksandra Barczak, Medical Lead, BreastCheck, CancerCare Manitoba

B-HCP-PRACTICE-CHANGE 2025.12



Cancer Loves Alcohol

With the release of [Canada's Guidance of Alcohol and Health](#), we are now encouraging patients to try to drink a maximum of two standard alcoholic drinks a week. When we look at cancer, there is no safe level.

We asked 400 Manitobans questions on alcohol. When asked how many drinks someone could have per week without impacting their long-term health, respondents gave an average of 5.7 drinks. Under the new guidance, this 5.7 drinks per week would be considered moderate risk, meaning that the chance of developing several different types of cancer including breast and colon cancer increases.

CancerCare Manitoba's "Cancer Loves Alcohol" campaign highlights the link between alcohol and cancer, leading Manitobans to rethink the next time they have a drink.

Help CancerCare Manitoba get the word out by talking to your patients about the link between alcohol and cancer. For more information and non-judgmental suggestions on how to reduce or eliminate consumption, visit PreventCancers.ca.

HPV and Hep B Vaccine Resources

As a trusted source of health information, clinicians play a critical role in guiding patients. To support these conversations, we are pleased to share new resources designed to help you discuss HPV and Hepatitis B vaccinations and explain how these vaccines contribute to cancer prevention.

Visit cancercare.mb.ca/screening/cancer-prevention/vaccine-resources to access:

- Recorded webinar: A Healthy Tomorrow starts with Vaccination Today
- Poster: Protect Yourself from Cancer

- Updated factsheet: Grade 6 School Immunization Program in 15 languages.
- Short video for parents and caregivers with subtitles in 7 Indigenous languages.



Stay in the know!

To be the first to know about changes to screening guidelines, education opportunities, and technology changes, we encourage all healthcare providers to sign up on our e-news mailing list here: <https://www.cancercare.mb.ca/screening/enews>



The Advanced Cancer Model of Care

Collaboration and Learning Opportunities

We are working to improve the experience of patients facing advanced pancreatic, esophageal, and hepatobiliary cancers through the **Advanced Cancer Model of Care (MOC)** project. Research on wait times and decision-making highlights significant opportunities to deliver more coordinated and compassionate support for patients and caregivers.

Why This Matters

Patients with advanced cancers often experience long waits, uncertainty, and fragmented care, despite their heavy symptom burden and rapid disease progression. Early referral to appropriate services and providing clear information are essential to ensuring timely, patient-centered care.

What We're Building

- **Clinical Pathway Mapping** to clarify current care routes and improve coordination.
- **Enhanced Care Pathways** designed to support earlier access to palliative care, navigation, psychosocial oncology, and nutrition services.
- **Supporting Primary Care Providers** with tools and education, including palliative care education, symptom management resources, and simulation-based communication and online learning opportunities.
- **Patient self-management and decision support resources** to increase access to information.

Upcoming Live Simulation Opportunities

Healthcare providers are invited to learn more about this project as part of Cancer Day for Primary Care and the Provincial Cancer Care Conference. More information will be coming soon about where healthcare providers can access live simulation-based training sessions. These sessions will provide hands-on learning and practical strategies & approaches to improve providers' confidence and communication.

Want to learn more about joining a simulation-based training session? Reach out to Baqiah or Princess (contact below) for more information.

Join the Collaboration

We welcome ongoing partnerships from providers across the care continuum. For more, contact byesufu@cancercare.mb.ca or pogeto@cancercare.mb.ca

Visit our [Professional Development webpage](#) to learn about upcoming webinars for healthcare providers.



New Physicians at CancerCare Manitoba in 2025



Dr. Kate Scarth

Radiation Oncologist, effective January 6, 2025

Dr. Scarth has recently completed her residency in Radiation Oncology at Dalhousie University, where she excelled in clinical practice, research, and leadership. During her training, she demonstrated exceptional skills in managing complex oncology cases and implementing innovative treatment techniques.

Dr. Scarth's research achievements include leading projects on prostate radiotherapy, adaptive radiotherapy, and national standards for stereotactic treatments. Her work has been presented at leading conferences, including ESTRO and CARO, and has influenced clinical practices at her training center.



Dr. Nikunj Patil

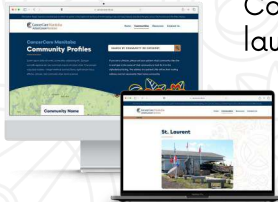
Radiation Oncologist, Western Manitoba Cancer Centre (WMCC), effective July 28, 2025

Dr. Patil is already a well-recognized and valued member within CancerCare Manitoba (CCMB), having completed his Advanced Radiation Oncology Fellowship at CCMB, which he began in July 2023. During his fellowship, he undertook clinical rotations in genitourinary, breast, GI, Thoracic, and central nervous system disease sites. He further enhanced his skills in Stereotactic Body radiotherapy (SBRT), allowing him to form strong working relationships with many of our staff and to gain valuable insight into our patient population and regional needs.

At WMCC, Dr. Patil will be practicing in the Prostate, Gastrointestinal, Thoracic, and Breast Disease Site Groups (DSGs), bringing both a well-rounded clinical background and a collaborative spirit to our team.

Community Profiles Indigenous Community Profiles - Community Highlight

First Nations • Métis • Inuit



CancerCare Manitoba, in partnership with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities, has launched an innovative website to help healthcare professionals create safer and more comprehensive care plans for patients returning to their communities. The Indigenous Community Profiles website is a valuable resource that provides geographical and travel information, as well as details on healthcare and community resources in Indigenous communities.

Minegoziibe Anishinabe (Pine Creek First Nation), is a community of approximately 700 residents (2021 Census), located in Camperville, Manitoba, and accessible by road. Ojibwe is the primary language spoken in the community.

Health services are provided through the **Pine Creek Health Centre**). For cancer-related support, the **Prairie Mountain Cancer Navigation Line** is available at **1-855-346-3710**. The closest **Radiation Therapy Centre** is located at the **Western Manitoba Cancer Centre (WMCC) in Brandon**, with additional cancer services offered through the **Community Cancer Program in Swan River**.

St. Adolphe is a small community in the RM of Ritchot, located 12 km south of Winnipeg along the Red River, with a population of 1,006 (2021 Census). It is home to an active MMF Métis Local (#81).

The nearest hospital is **Victoria Hospital in Winnipeg**, where residents can access pharmacies, bloodwork, cancer care, and specialized services. Local and nearby towns provide senior supports, transportation, and basic needs. Mental health services are available through provincial hotlines or in Winnipeg. Additional specialized care is accessible in **Steinbach** and **Boundary Trails**. The community also features the **St. Adolphe Arena** for local care.

Visit ccmbindigenouscommunityprofiles.ca



@CancerCareMB



@CancerCareMB



@cancercare.mb

www.cancercare.mb.ca