ISSUE 54 • SUMMER 2026

CANCER *talk* for Primary Care

YOUR SOURCE FOR UP-TO-DATE CANCER CARE INFORMATION

STAY CONNECTED: PATIENT RESOURCES & NAVIGATION SUPPORT

Navigator Newsletter for Patients and Caregivers

Each month, the *Navigator Newsletter* features updates on CancerCare Manitoba's Hope & Healing programs, along with other helpful resources and information for patients and caregivers.

Access the newsletter here, or scan the QR code.

SCAN HERE

Winnipeg Navigation Phone Line

Primary care providers are encouraged to use the Winnipeg Navigation phone line for support when working up patients with a suspected cancer diagnosis.

Call: 204-226-2262

Message from the Chief Medical Officer

Read more on page 2.

Updated Referral Guidelines

New referral guideline information on page 3.

Updates to BreastCheck Screening Eligibility

Screening appointments available at age 45. Read more 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 Dr. Arbind Dubey
Vice President for Medical Services and Chief Medical Officer

I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to connect with Manitoba's primary care community through this latest edition of *CancerTalk*.

In my early years of residency in CancerCare Manitoba, I was learning more than just the complexities of oncology; I was learning how the Canadian healthcare system comes together. Over the years, as I built my practice as a radiation oncologist, I sat across from countless patients at one of the most vulnerable moments of their lives. In those quiet exam rooms, discussing specialized treatment plans, a fundamental truth became clear to me early on: a patient's care does not begin within the walls of CancerCare Manitoba. It begins in your clinics.

Today, my vantage point has widened. Serving as the Chief Medical Officer, I now look at our system through an executive lens, navigating the strategic and administrative realities of provincial cancer control. Yet, whether I am looking at a single patient's chart or reviewing a province-wide healthcare strategy, the conclusion remains the same: specialized oncology can only achieve its best results when it is rooted in a strong primary care foundation.

Managing cancer is a shared responsibility, and our teams rely heavily on your partnership to deliver the best possible outcomes.

The baseline of cancer care in Manitoba sits squarely in the primary care community. As primary care providers, you are a constant presence throughout the entire patient journey. You hold the long-term relationships and vital clinical insights that lead to the initial diagnosis, you provide essential support during active treatment, and you continue to care for them through survivorship and long-term life after cancer.

At the leadership level, our focus is on ensuring that working with us is as straightforward and supportive as possible. We are continuously working towards a unified system where clinical pathways are clearer, communication is open, and transition of care between our clinics is as seamless as possible at every stage of a patient's journey.

When we align your day-to-day clinical insights with our provincial planning, we create a stronger, more compassionate system for all Manitobans.

Thank you for your relentless dedication, your partnership, and the vital care you provide for our patients every day.

BreastCheck

Updates to BreastCheck Breast Cancer Screening Eligibility

BreastCheck is CancerCare Manitoba's provincial breast cancer screening program. As of December 2025, BreastCheck accepts breast cancer screening appointments for people age 45-49 in addition to those age 50-74. Asymptomatic, average-risk people aged 45 and over can self-refer to BreastCheck by calling 1-855-952-4325.

In December of 2026, BreastCheck will begin accepting breast cancer screening appointments for people age 40-44.

For more information, visit **cancercare.mb.ca/screening** scan the QR code.

SCAN HERE

Community Profiles

First Nations ◦ Métis ◦ Inuit

Indigenous Community Profiles - Community Highlight

Waterhen is located on the east shore of the Waterhen River midway between Waterhen Lake and Lake Manitoba with a population of 476. The nearest healthcare centre is in Brandon, and the nearest community cancer program in Dauphin.

Visit ccmbindigenouscommunityprofiles.ca

Updated Referral Guidelines Now in Effect

CancerCare Manitoba's updated Referral Guidelines came into effect on **June 1, 2026**, following a comprehensive review of our referral processes.

Updated website content is now available to support these changes, including a streamlined referral process, revised forms, and clearer guidance on the minimum information required for patient referrals.

Key updates:

- **Complete referrals** are processed promptly and forwarded for triage to determine the appropriate next steps for consultation.
- **Incomplete referrals** are returned to the referring provider for completion prior to processing.

These improvements are designed to strengthen our ability to triage, plan, and manage referrals—supporting more timely, coordinated patient care.

The updated guidelines are available on the CancerCare Manitoba website—click **here** or scan the QR code.

SCAN HERE

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support as we implement these enhancements.

For general inquiries, please contact **1-844-320-4545**.

Minimum Required Investigations: Liver Referrals

To support timely triage, referrals to CancerCare Manitoba must include diagnosis-specific investigations. Incomplete referrals may be returned.

For urgent consults, please page the on-call physician at CancerCare Manitoba through Health Sciences Centre paging at 204-787-2071 or St. Boniface Hospital paging at 204-237-2053.

Hepatocellular Carcinoma (HCC)

1. Liver imaging (CT or MRI) within 3 months
2. Bilirubin, albumin, INR, AFP, platelet count within 3 months

Cholangiocarcinoma

1. Pathology/cytology within 6 months
2. CT chest, abdomen, pelvis within 3 months (or date ordered:)
   Must specify for cancer staging on imaging requisition
3. Albumin, bilirubin, INR, CA 19-9 within 3 months

Liver Metastases (SBRT)

1. CT chest, abdomen, pelvis within 3 months (or date ordered:)
   Must specify for cancer staging on imaging requisition
2. LFTs and INR within 3 months

Liver Mass/Metastases with no previous malignancy and/or clinical information suggestion primary DSG

1. CT chest, abdomen, pelvis within 3 months (or date ordered:)
   Must specify for cancer staging on imaging requisition
2. MRI liver within 3 months (specify cancer staging)
3. LFTs and INR within 3 months

Referrals Must Include

1. Completed referral form
2. Referral letter including history of present illness, past medical history, and medication list
3. All required investigations attached

Access full guidelines **here** or scan the QR code.

SCAN HERE

Note: This is provided as a guide and is not intended as clinical guidance.

Advanced Cancer MOC Simulation Education

Enhance your communication skills. Promote compassionate care. Improve outcomes.

Join an immersive, live/virtual simulation -based learning experience designed for healthcare providers handling complex care conversations.

On behalf of the Advanced Cancer Model of Care (MOC), CancerCare Manitoba, in collaboration with the Red River College simulation laboratory, is offering a live/virtual simulation. This session is intended for healthcare providers who engage in serious illness conversations and are looking to strengthen their skills through hands-on, experiential learning. It focuses on improving the experience of patients with advanced pancreatic, esophageal, and hepatobiliary cancers and their caregivers.

Some of the most impactful moments in care occur during difficult conversations—exploring goals of care, addressing uncertainty, and responding to sensitive requests, particularly during the emotionally challenging diagnostic waiting period. This simulation-based session on serious illness conversations in diagnostic uncertainty equips you with the skills to navigate these critical interactions with confidence, empathy, and professionalism.

Why Attend

Gain practical, hands-on experience in a safe, supportive environment where you can refine your communication skills and improve patient-centered care outcomes.

What You Will Learn

Apply Proven Communication Frameworks

Use structured, evidence-based approaches (e.g., SPIKES) to deliver difficult news and guide goals-of-care discussions with clarity and sensitivity, especially in diagnostic uncertainty.

Strengthen Empathetic, Person-Centered Communication

Enhance your ability to build trust, support patient engagement, and maintain a compassionate, nonjudgmental presence during emotionally charged conversations.

Integrate Cultural & Psychosocial Awareness

Recognize and respond to cultural, emotional, and psychosocial factors to provide inclusive, respectful, and family-centered care.

Explore Patient Values & Goals of Care

Deepen your ability to understand patients' perspectives—their fears, values, wishes, and experiences of suffering—including complex discussions about serious illness and goals of care.

Continued...

Respond to MAiD Requests with Confidence
Demonstrate professional, empathetic responses to Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) inquiries, including clarifying intent and identifying appropriate clinical and team-based next steps.

Learning Format

- Realistic, high-impact simulation scenarios
- Expert-facilitated debriefing and feedback
- Interactive, small-group learning
- Safe environment to practice and grow

Who Should Attend

- Physicians
- Nurses and nurse practitioners
- Allied health professionals
- Oncology and palliative care teams
- Healthcare providers involved in serious illness conversations

Outcomes You Can Expect

- Improved confidence in difficult conversations
- Stronger interprofessional communication
- Greater alignment with patient values and goals

When

- **Date:** July 16, 2026
- **Time:** 4:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- **Location:** RRC Polytech Simulation Lab/ Virtual

Be the Difference in Your Patients' Most Critical Moments

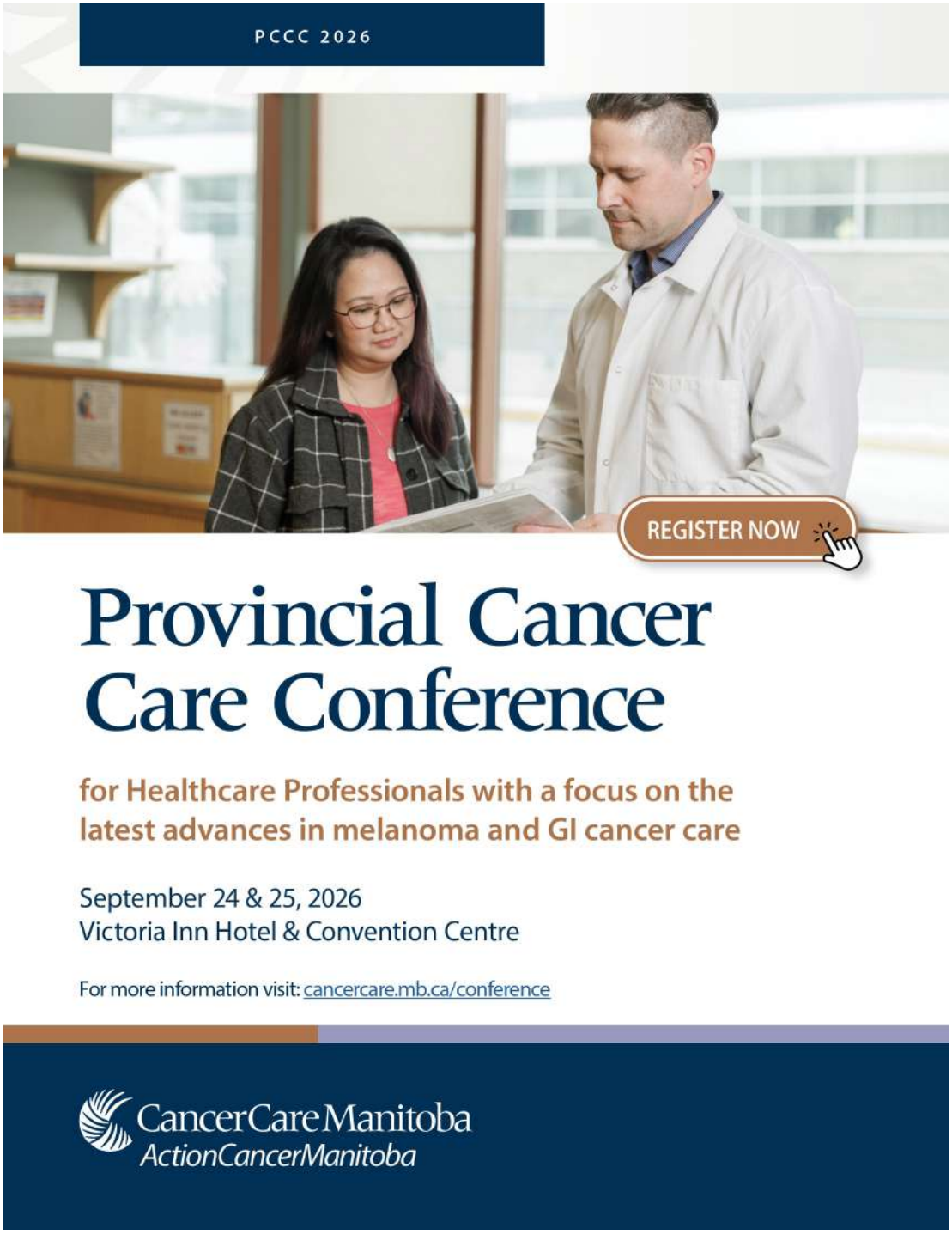
Register today with the QR code to secure your spot in this transformative simulation experience by July 7.

SCAN HERE

For more information, contact Baqiah Yesufu at byesufu@cancercare.m.ca, or Princess Ogeto at pogeto@cancercare.mb.ca

Missed the July 7 deadline?
If you're interested in future Advanced Cancer Skills Simulation Education opportunities, contact Baqiah or Princess to learn about upcoming sessions.

This activity has been certified by the College of Family Physicians of Canada and the Manitoba Chapter for up to 2 Mainpro+® Certified Activity credits.


PCCC 2026
REGISTER NOW
Provincial Cancer Care Conference
for Healthcare Professionals with a focus on the latest advances in melanoma and GI cancer care
September 24 & 25, 2026
Victoria Inn Hotel & Convention Centre
For more information visit: cancercare.mb.ca/conference
CancerCare Manitoba
ActionCancerManitoba