

ANNUAL REPORT CARD ON CANCER IN CANADA^(TM)

Cancer Advocacy Coalition of Canada examines and compares progress and impediments in the cancer system

Toronto, ON, July 11, 2013 – The Cancer Advocacy Coalition of Canada (CACC) *2012-2013 Report Card on Cancer in CanadaTM* reveals that government funding and support is desperately needed consistently across the country to improve the current landscape for cancer care, treatment and prevention in Canada.

The Report Card highlights the crucial need for regulatory approval and funding of precision medicine through targeted therapy and biomarker testing, which would lead to more efficient use of expensive cancer drugs. Precision medicine would allow for delivery of the most effective treatment, to the right patient, at the right time helping to save money and lives. The Report Card findings also show that all provinces and territories must continue to implement, fund and improve upon the smoking cessation strategies currently available to help reduce the mortality rates and costs due to smoking-related malignancies in Canada.

“This year’s Report Card demonstrates the great need for provincial and federal support and action in the battle against cancer, but it also highlights the strides that have been made in discovering and developing better, more efficient and cost-effective approaches to cancer treatment and prevention,” says Dr. Dauna Crooks, Chair, CACC.

The Report Card also explores the efficacy of bans against smoking in private vehicles with children, now implemented across all Canadian provinces (with exception of Quebec), revealing through empirical evidence that these bans were successful in reducing second hand smoke (SHS) exposure without increasing smoking at home.

The CACC’s annual Report Card on Cancer in CanadaTM is the country’s only independent evaluation of cancer system performance. The 2012-2013 Report Card asks the question on behalf of all Canadians touched by cancer: Are we benefiting from progress or being harmed by impediment to advances in cancer care and prevention, and calls on governments to work together to provide solutions to the disparities, inexplicable variations, gaps and outdated policies that abound in the cancer system.

2012-2013 Report Card Highlights

Precision Medicine:

- **The Regulatory Approval and Funding of Precision Medicine in Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer**
Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in Canada among men and women. The majority of lung cancers (85 per cent) are classified as non-small cell. For a subset of patients, clinical testing for the detection of epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) gene mutations and anaplastic lymphoma kinase (ALK) rearrangements should now be considered the standard of care in order to identify the most appropriate treatments.

Smoking in Canada:

- **Effectiveness of Bans Against Smoking Inside Private Vehicles in Canada**
Since April 2008, Canadian provinces (with the exception of Quebec) started to adopt the ban against smoking in private vehicles carrying children. Canada led the way in adopting such legislation and this analysis shows the bans have been effective in reducing exposure to second hand smoke without causing smokers to light more cigarettes at home.
- **The Postal Code Lottery of Cancer Prevention in Canada: Discrepancies in Public and Private Funding for Smoking Cessation Products**
Despite recent advances in cancer therapy, the overall survival of patients with advanced lung cancer and other smoking-related malignancies has not changed dramatically for decades. This detailed analysis of how and where smoking cessation supports are available to Canadians shows gaps that make the battle to quit, harder to win.

Additional highlights:

- **The Cancer Drug Access Website**
Developed by Dr. Kong Khoo, The Cancer Drug Access Website is freely available to all Canadians who wish to track exactly which cancer drugs their own province offers and on what terms, as compared to other provinces. The drugs are listed by name, disease type, date of Health Canada approval, indication, as well as access/funding by province. Based on these parameters, graphical summaries of access and funding by province are created automatically with each search. With this comprehensive information, the website is a unique reference tool for information on access to cancer drugs in Canada.
- **Patient Story: Vickie Thomas**
This year's Report Card features the patient perspective on the importance and life-saving capability of precision medicine. Vickie Thomas shares her cancer journey as she discovers that she has lung cancer and is anaplastic lymphoma kinase (ALK) positive.

About the Cancer Advocacy Coalition of Canada (CACC)

The Cancer Advocacy Coalition of Canada (CACC) is a registered, non-profit cancer group dedicated to citizen advocacy, public education, policy research and evaluation of cancer system performance. The CACC operates on unrestricted grants based on guidelines that ensure the organization's autonomy. For more information, or to view and download the 2012-2013 Report Card on Cancer in Canada™, visit the CACC's website at www.canceradvocacy.ca.



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