

The burden of cancer is not evenly distributed throughout the Canadian population. Unjust, avoidable and socially-constructed differences in health outcomes—health inequities—are shaped by broader socioeconomic, demographic, and geographic contexts.

In January and February 2022, three engagement sessions with Policy Leaders, Healthcare Providers, and BC Cancer Leadership were carried out as part of a Michael Smith Health Research BC Convening and Collaborating (C²) Award.

Drawing on the experience and expertise of participants, facilitated discussions explored the top priorities and concerns regarding cancer-related health equity, including how these issues are being, or might be, addressed at the individual-and system-levels.

5 PRIORITY AREAS TO ADVANCE EQUITY-ORIENTED CANCER CARE



Meaningful commitment & buy-in from leadership

Addressing inequities through health system adaptations must be supported by meaningful commitment from leadership at all levels of the organization.

Knowledge mobilization & staff training



Need for knowledge mobilization, education, and training to help raise awareness about health and healthcare equity and to coordinate work aimed at redressing inequities.

Data & measurement of equity indicators

Need to develop metrics related to health and healthcare equity to improve understanding of the current environment and ability to measure progress towards achieving health equity goals.



Recognition of social & structural determinants of health

Need to recognize the intersection of social and structural determinants of health (e.g., geography, socioeconomic, historical injustices, racism, mental health and substance use challenges, and/or disabilities) and acknowledge that these are the root causes of inequities.



Intersectoral collaborations, policies, & practices

Need for intersectoral collaborations, policies and practices that acknowledge the impact of social and structural determinants of health across the cancer continuum, and for new partnerships that address the complex and intersecting nature of health inequities.

FUTURE DIRECTION



Promote equity in BC's cancer care system



Expand engagement across BC Cancer's six regional centres



Advance equity-oriented research priorities



Apply existing evidence-informed knowledge and tools to practice