CBCN Advocacy Guides: Taking Action on Canadian Drug Reforms - CADTH Changes

CBCN RCCS

Canadian Breast Cancer Network
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What is CADTH?

The Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) is an independent, not-for-profit organization responsible for providing Canada's health care decision-makers with objective evidence to help make informed decisions about the optimal use of drugs and medical devices in our health care system. Provincial health authorities rely on CADTH's expertise and recommendations to make decisions about which cancer drugs to publicly reimburse on their formularies.

New Changes CADTH's Drug Reimbursement Review Processes:

In September 2020, CADTH implemented a revised procedure for its drug reimbursement review processes (i.e., pan-Canadian Oncology Drug Review, Common Drug Review and Interim Plasma Protein Product Review).

CADTH has stated that they are looking to improve and align their procedures, submission requirements, and internal processes by adapting the best practices of each of the individual drug review processes (based on principals of transparency, efficiency, timeliness, sustainability, and equity).

What Is The Impact On Patients?

The cancer patient community has raised concerns about many of the changes to the review process. The major areas of concern are as follows:

1. The provisional algorithm development process requires greater clarity. The provisional algorithm affects how oncology drugs will be funded and implemented in clinical practice in provinces-including determining how a treatment will be used in sequence with other therapies. While CADTH will now allow for specific feedback from patient groups on the algorithm, there needs to be greater transparency around the process for developing and implementing the algorithm.

2. There are fewer opportunities for clinicians to provide input. Clinicians have specialized knowledge about how new cancer drugs can fit into the existing treatment landscape and where there are still unmet needs in treating patients. Their input is essential for ensuring that authorities are making truly informed decisions about treatments and their use in Canada.

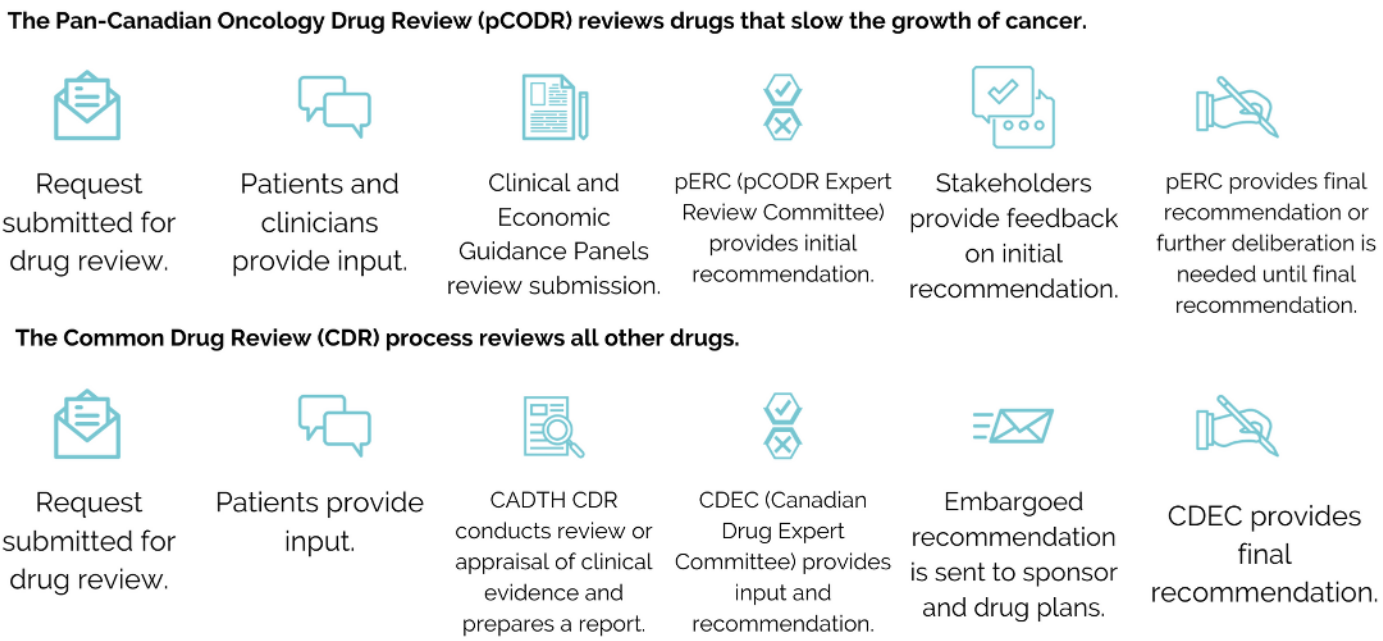
Together, these proposed changes could have a significant impact on the ability of patients to inform, and be meaningfully engaged in, the decision-making

process around oncology drugs in Canada.

What Are Advocates Recommending?

CADTH recently concluded a consultation on the proposed changes in August 2020. CBCN, in alignment with the CanCertainty coalition, has called for mechanisms to promote greater transparency and support patient and clinician engagement with CADTH. These include actions to create a system within CADTH to generate resources to support patient organizations to engage with CADTH and an exploration of conditional reimbursement mechanisms to address uncertainties in clinical trial designs-including frameworks for the assessment of Phase II trial data and real-world evidence.

Current CADTH Process



Taking Action

Recommendations from CADTH's drug review processes have an enormous impact on the accessibility and availability of cancer treatments across Canada. It's critical that the perspectives and lived experiences of actual patients are informing the decision-making process on these treatments. The changes to the review process could undermine CADTH's stated commitment to the principals of transparency, equity and timeliness by operating non-transparently, and limiting the ability of experienced clinicians and patients from advising the process. Patients deserve to have their voices heard-especially when it comes to the treatments they rely on to combat their cancer.

If you are concerned about the impact that these changes could have on access to cancer medications for patients, here are some actions you can take to make your voice heard:

1. Write to the President and CEO of CADTH - Contact the head of CADTH to voice your concerns about the proposed new changes to CADTH's drug review process.
   Ms. Suzanne McGurn
   President and CEO
   The Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health
   865 Carling Ave., Suite 600
   Ottawa, ON Canada K1S 5S8

2. Write to the Minister of Health - Share your thoughts on the proposed changes and the impacts they could have on cancer patients with the Minister of Health.
   Minister of Health
   House of Commons
   Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6
   hcminister.ministresc@canada.ca

You can view and use this sample letter when contacting CADTH and/or the Minister of Health.