

BACKGROUND

Disease Pathway Maps

To help identify gaps in care and set quality improvement targets, Cancer Care Ontario (CCO) is committed to producing disease pathway maps for the most common types of cancer by 2015.

Disease Pathway Management

Disease Pathway Management (DPM) is an innovative approach to quality improvement within Ontario's cancer system. This approach brings together experts from across the cancer continuum to improve the quality of care, processes and patient experience for a given type of cancer. An important step in the DPM approach to quality improvement is the development of Disease Pathway Maps.

Disease Pathway Maps

Disease Pathway Maps (pathways) are a quality improvement tool for the Ontario cancer system. The pathways are essentially flowcharts that provide a high-level overview of the care that a cancer patient in Ontario should receive. The pathways are organized by cancer type (e.g., lung cancer) and phase of the [cancer journey](#) (e.g., screening, diagnosis, treatment).

The pathways represent evidence-based best practice for Ontario patients during a specific phase of the cancer journey. Pathways are developed based on evidence from local, national and international clinical practice guidelines. In the absence of scientific evidence, the consensus of leading multidisciplinary experts in Ontario is used. The development of pathways is an evolving process that will be continuously improved based on stakeholders' feedback and input.

Objective of Disease Pathway Maps

The Disease Pathway Maps (pathways) are intended to set care expectations for cancer patients in Ontario, based on best scientific evidence. They provide information about what type of care should be offered to Ontario cancer patients and where applicable, they link to Ontario clinical guidelines.

By describing what care should be provided to Ontario patients, the pathways may help identify areas for improvement along the cancer journey. The goal of pathways is to facilitate improvements in quality, access, appropriateness, and coordination of care across the patient journey.

The pathways can be used by clinicians as informational resources and as a tool to promote discussion and collaboration between specialties. The pathways are informational resources and are not intended to constitute medical advice or replace clinical judgment.