

Prostate Cancer Supportive Care (PCSC) Program for Patients And Partners: A Model For Meeting An Unmet Need For PC Patients

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Background

Men diagnosed with prostate cancer (PC) face treatment-related sequelae that affect their health and quality of life.

The Prostate Cancer Supportive Care (PCSC) Program at the Vancouver Prostate Centre was created in 2013. It is a clinical, educational, and research-based program for men and their family members to address prostate cancer-specific challenges such as erectile dysfunction and urinary incontinence and offers a proactive approach to lifestyle changes in diet and exercise.

The program includes education sessions and associated clinics on the following topics:



Methods

We describe the development and evolution of PCSC's prostate cancer-focused approach over the last ten years and report metrics from our program's database.

Results

- Personnel and clinic space**
A Medical Director and Program Manager set the mission, oversee the day-to-day operations, and hire and manage the allied health clinicians and support staff. Office/clinic space is rotated during the week to accommodate a sexual health RN (1.4 full-time equivalent or FTE), 2 pelvic floor physiotherapists, a nurse practitioner, a registered dietitian, a clinical exercise physiologist (all 0.2 FTE), and a clinical counsellor (0.4 FTE).
- Funding**
Current funding for the PCSC Program is from a grant from the BC Ministry of Health, research grants and contracts, and philanthropic donations. The program is offered to all patients free of charge.
- Website offerings**
The PCSC website, pcscprogram.ca, offers educational videos, handouts, and other resources. Patients can sign up to attend the real-time live interactive education sessions held each month.

Locations accessing the website during 2022



- Clinic appointments**
Only residents of British Columbia can be seen for clinic appointments. Patients can choose to be seen either in person or virtually.
- Metrics**
As of 05/2023, 3351 men from BC have registered. Patients choose sessions relevant to their interests or needs (Table).
- Data Collection and Research**
We enter all patient data into a database, including validated patient-reported outcomes (PROs). PCSC conducts clinical research and has published 14 peer-reviewed papers.

Table: Module offerings, attendance, session, and appointment numbers, Jan 2013 - May 2023*

Modules	Attendees, n	Group education, n (# virtual sessions/ total sessions)	Clinic Appointments, n (# virtual appointments/ total appointments)
Introduction to PC and primary treatment options	945	945 (35/159)	not applicable
Sexual health and intimacy	1745	844 (43/122)	1519 (1195 /6109)
Managing the side effects of ADT	443	376 (25/69)	212 (7/313)
Pelvic floor physiotherapy for incontinence	1304	910 (37/97)	594 (494/2382)
Counselling	444	not applicable	444 (612/1629)
Advanced disease management	85	85 (37/30)	not applicable
Nutrition	742	195 (36/31)	361 (313/593)
Exercise	826	455 (39/70)	674 (580/2167)

*The program started offering virtual health appointments starting April 2020.

Conclusions

- The need for PC supportive care is well recognized but may be challenging when the services are fragmented and time-consuming for clinicians or staff to arrange.
- PCSC is a unique survivorship program in that it is prostate-cancer-focused. All PCSC Program modules can be accessed with one registration. It is convenient for patients because it is housed in one location, facilitating communication across disciplines.
- After over ten years in operation, the program has grown in terms of annual participation and the scope of offerings.
- The transition from in-person-only clinics and educational sessions to virtual platforms increased the accessibility of PCSC clinical services for British Columbia PC patients and family members.
- We attribute the success of our program to this model and our team approach to meeting the individual patient's needs.

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