

Canadian public payer best practices for providing timely patient access to cancer therapies

Description

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Abstract

Purpose: There are concerns about the timeliness of access to innovative cancer drug treatments, as delays in treatment are known to have impacts on patient survival. Efforts have been made to accelerate regulatory and health technology assessment review times. However, delays in later stages of public reimbursement and implementation processes are impacting timely patient access to new cancer treatments. A recent analysis of time to listing for oncology therapies noted some significant differences amongst Canadian jurisdictions. A multi-jurisdictional assessment – the first of its kind – was undertaken to examine processes for integrating new therapies into cancer care systems. The goals were to better understand provincial processes for planning and implementation of new oncology therapies; and, to identify optimal practices for their timely integration into the system. **Methods:** Standardized, confidential interviews were carried out with eleven Canadian oncology payer stakeholders representing seven jurisdictions. In addition to summarizing jurisdiction-specific planning and implementation processes, data were evaluated to identify best practices for consideration by Canadian jurisdictions to optimize their approaches. **Results:** Implementation processes should focus on the needs of the patient and accelerate patient access once national undertakings have concluded. Concentrating on the needs of the patient (rather than the needs of the system) creates a “North Star” for simplifying and re-aligning processes. **Conclusion:** Adoption of proposed best practices and recommendations to proactively initiate implementation processes well before completion of national pricing negotiations could decrease delays in patient access to new oncology treatments and optimize efforts to improve patient outcomes.

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