

March 2025 | ISSUE #41

# Patient and Family Advisory Council

Cuthbert Lab & Oncology Outcomes

# Welcome

We are pleased to share that the Oncology Outcomes team was successful in the Fall 2024 CIHR Project Grant competition on “Generating Synthetic Data for Oncology Use Cases to Facilitate Multi-Jurisdictional Research”. Our team is excited to get started on this project!

Our teams are also hard at work preparing submissions for the March Canadian Institute of Health Research Project Grant competition. The first project, “TAI-CARE: TAI chi to Improve Chronic pain And Recovery Experiences in cancer survivors”, led by Dr. Colleen Cuthbert is a re-submission that we are hopeful will be successful. The second project, “Informing Future Workforce Planning: Leveraging Health Administrative Data to Measure the Complexity of Cancer Care”, led by Dr. Winson Cheung aims to quantify and estimate care complexity.

We eagerly await the results of these submissions in the Fall and will keep everyone updated as we learn more information!

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# Research Highlights

## Oncology Outcomes

Real-world Evidence on First- and Second-line Palliative Chemotherapy in Advanced Pancreatic Cancer.

### STUDY PURPOSE

The prognosis of **pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC)** remains very poor.

- Most patients of PDAC are not amenable to curative-intent treatment.
- Optimized palliative management is needed.



Summarize + assess literature on **first- and second-line palliative chemotherapy** in advanced PDAC.

#### Focusing on:

##### ▶ 2 key types of literature:

- Real-world evidence (RWE).
- Randomized controlled trials (RCT).

##### ▶ 2 of the most established **first-line regimens**:

- folfirinox (FFX).
- gemcitabine plus nab-paclitaxel (GnP).

##### ▶ **No restrictions placed on focus for second-line regimens.** Due to lack of evidence on optimal regimen.



### CONCLUSIONS & FUTURE IMPACT

#### First-line Therapies:

RCT and RWE literature shows...

FFX and GnP regimens are **effective** and **reasonably safe**.

#### Second-line Therapies:

There are considerable **gaps in knowledge**.

- Few RCTs are available. Existing RCTs provide **limited guidance**.
- Effects of different sequences of therapy administration is **not addressed**.

Future RWE and RCT studies should explore **optimal treatment sequence**.



There is a **need for prognostic and predictive biomarkers** to inform clinical decision making and enable **personalized management** in advanced PDAC.

[Click here for full article.](#)

## Cuthbert Lab

### ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN PHYSICIAN PRESCRIBING BEHAVIOR AND PERSISTENT POSTOPERATIVE OPIOID USE AMONG CANCER PATIENTS UNDERGOING CURATIVE-INTENT SURGERY: A POPULATION-BASED COHORT STUDY

Yuan Xu, Colleen A Cuthbert, Safiya Karim, Shiyong Kong, Joseph C Dort, May Lynn Quan, Ashley V Hinthner, Hude Quan, Brenda R Hemmelgarn, Winson Y Cheung

**Opioid prescriptions have skyrocketed, contributing to misuse and overdose deaths. Canada ranks #2 globally in per capita opioid consumption**, with over 21 million prescriptions filled annually. **Cancer patients are especially vulnerable**, receiving 22% more opioid prescriptions than non-cancer patients.

### STUDY FINDINGS

Examining the link between prescribers' opioid prescribing history and persistent postoperative opioid use in cancer patients undergoing curative-intent surgery:

- **8.6%** of cancer patients developed **persistent opioid use** after surgery.
- Patients with **high-dose prescribing doctors** were **2.4x** more likely to **continue opioid use** long-term.
- Other risk factors: younger age, comorbidities, pre-surgical opioid use, chemotherapy, and tumor type.

### CONCLUSIONS

These results suggests that **prescriber behavior plays an important role in long-term opioid use among cancer patients**.

Better **opioid stewardship** and **individualized pain management strategies** are needed to **reduce the risk of prolonged opioid dependency**.



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# Study Recruitment



We are looking for **just one more** participant to meet our recruitment goals:

- ▶ Remote Assessment of Physical Fitness  
Measures: Reliability and Validity Study  
[Poster Link to Share](#)

If you think the studies might be relevant to your contacts, please feel free to share the website or poster links. For the additional details on each study click [here](#).

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## Coming Up

The next newsletter will release in April 2025.

Previous issues of the PFAC newsletter have been posted online:  
<https://www.cuthbertlab.com/advisory-council>

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