

A collaborative
program of
Alberta Health
Services and
Covenant Health

FAQs for Diagnostic Imaging

Comprehensive Breast Care Program

Patients may be referred into the Comprehensive Breast Care Program at any time in the care pathway, but ideally upon identification of abnormal breast changes (lump, suspicious mammogram, or other clinical findings).

To refer:

Complete the CBCP referral form:

- Available online at www.albertacancer.ca/Professionals/CBCP/
- Available on netcare at <http://netcarehome.capitalhealth.ca>

Fax referral to:

780.643.4488

For information:

To access other clinical or patient support services, call the CBCP office at:

780.638.CBCP (2227)

Mailing address:

Ste 1500, 10123 – 99 St
NW Edmonton, AB T5J
3H1

What is the purpose of the Comprehensive Breast Care Program?

The Comprehensive Breast Care Program (CBCP) aims to offer timely, consistent, accessible care to individuals with abnormal breast changes, including breast cancer and suspicion of cancer. The goal is to ensure seamless, integrated, patient-centered, high quality care.

The CBCP is the demonstration phase of a program offered by Alberta Health Services – Edmonton area. It is intended to improve access and reduce wait times for breast cancer services.

Why was the CBCP established?

While breast cancer is the most common cancer in women and the second leading cause of cancer deaths, family physicians may see only a few cases annually. The CBCP is designed to support family physicians and their patients through the often complex and time-consuming diagnostic and care process.

Family physicians benefit from being immediately connected with a network of clinical experts who are familiar with current developments and practices in breast cancer diagnosis and treatment. Radiologists and surgeons benefit from streamlined referrals and coordination of bookings and records.

Patients benefit from the additional services that are available through the program, such as education and psychosocial support.

All provider groups benefit from the program's multi-disciplinary quality assurance program, which provides an opportunity to review cases and outcomes within a learning environment.

Who can refer patients to the CBCP?

Patients are accepted only upon referral from their family physician or surgeon. As well, radiologists may recommend that family physicians consider referring certain patients (e.g., those with abnormal findings or high risk factors) into the CBCP to be more closely followed.

Referred patients are accepted at any time during the diagnostic/care path, and they may withdraw from the program at any time or decline to participate in any care options.

How does the program work with radiology?

Patients who are referred into CBCP by a family physician (when abnormal breast changes are first suspected) are registered with the program and then booked for an appropriate diagnostic workup. The CBCP ensures that patients are booked at a DI facility in this order of preference:

- at the facility requested by the referring family physician, or
- at the facility previously attended by the patient, if known, or
- at a facility near the patient's home/work, or
- at the facility with the next available appointment opening.

CBCP booking staff work with the booking/triage staff at the receiving diagnostic imaging facility to accommodate the site's booking requirements, criteria and protocols, as well as intra-facility bookings for more advanced work-up procedures.



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Sometimes the patient is not already registered with the CBCP prior to the diagnostic work-up. In these cases, when reporting results to the family physician, the diagnostic imaging facility may opt to inform the family physician that CBCP services and supports are available to the patient. However, the decision regarding whether to refer the patient to CBCP remains with the family physician.

Note that the CBCP does not coordinate screening mammograms – these should continue to be booked directly between the family physician and DI facility.

How does the program work with family physicians?

The program is designed to ensure the family physician remains the patient's primary care provider and source of information and guidance. As well, the referring physician may specify preferred providers or sites (DI facilities, surgeons) throughout the care journey.

Participation in the CBCP is voluntary for physicians and patients who wish to access the program's diagnostic, clinical, navigation and support services.

What are the benefits to family physicians?

The CBCP offers family physicians the following services/resources:

- Direct consultation regarding diagnostic steps and treatment options.
- Direct booking of appointments (DI, surgery) at the physician's request.
- Help with identifying and booking qualified surgeons who can deliver timely care.
- Direct access to medical breast experts for consultation regarding patients with atypical breast mass or negative imaging
- Updates throughout the care process regarding the patient's progress, status and next steps.
- Recommendations regarding ongoing monitoring and follow-up.

What are the benefits to radiologists?

Radiologists should find that family physicians are well equipped to manage the care of patients with breast cancer.

CBCP patients are generally well prepared for their diagnostic and care journey, having received comprehensive education and decision-support tools. Patients requiring surgery are managed and booked in a consistent and timely manner.

Finally, the CBCP supports the care pathway by ensuring all prerequisite documentation is in place. The program also tracks patient bookings and attendance at appointments to ensure a seamless transition between providers and facilities.

How does the CBCP coordinate with Alberta Screen Test?

At the time diagnostic results are reported, the family physician is advised about the availability of CBCP support and services. The decision regarding whether to refer a patient to the CBCP remains with the family physician.

Is there a cost to physicians or patients?

There is no charge to either physicians or patients for any CBCP services.

What supports are available to patients?

All referred patients undergo distress screening to identify those who could benefit from psychosocial support. Clinical social workers and nurse navigators provide support to patients who may have emotional, family, social, physical or financial concerns related to the diagnostic process or upon receipt of a positive diagnosis for cancer.

Patients with a positive biopsy are also provided with breast cancer educational materials and referrals to community services to ensure they have the tools and resources to make appropriate care decisions.