

# The importance of Canadian guidelines for cancer care

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For nearly 30 years now, clinical practice guidelines have been increasing in popularity. These documents often guide our practice of emergency general surgery, trauma care, surgical critical care, oncologic therapies, transplantation and even elements of scheduled general surgery. While many of these guidelines have traditionally been created under the banner of a specific subspecialty society by clinicians with a particular expertise and interest in the topic of choice, they are often limited in their potential applicability. More specifically, a broader view of all stakeholders (including patients) is frequently absent and, therefore, reduces our ability to extrapolate these frameworks into the care of specific patients within our own local clinical environments. As a result, we must pay particular attention to evidence-based guidelines that supersede these challenges.

The Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC) is a government-funded, independent organization that aims to improve cancer prevention, therapy and outcomes across all demographics within Canada. Racial, gender and economic equality stand at the forefront. To this end, CPAC has utilized a standard Delphi process of involved topic experts to construct 4 relevant guidelines for cancer care (rectal, breast, gynecologic and thoracic cancers). These standards each include commentary and recommendations on surgeon training, practice settings and quality processes. They may also be implemented in the arenas of program funding, surgeon credentialing, planning and recruitment and, of course, patient-focused care. While we hope that CPAC continues to develop, mature and implement their message via guidance for all Canadian surgeons across every oncologic subspecialty, for now we have an excellent opportunity to take note of these initial 4 oncologic standards and promote their usage within all of our environments.

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