

Renewed funding for the Canadian Cancer Clinical Trials Network will help more cancer patients access clinical trials

Toronto (July 9, 2018) – Today the Canadian Cancer Clinical Trials Network (3CTN) announced receipt of renewed funding from the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research (OICR) and a two year funding commitment from the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (the Partnership). 3CTN’s work in helping sustain access to Canada-wide trials and engagement is also being supported by six other regional partners: Alberta Cancer Foundation, CancerCare Manitoba, Eastern Regional Health Authority, QEII Health Sciences Centre Foundation, BC Cancer Foundation, and Quebec Clinical Research Organization in Cancer.

The funds will help ensure Canada remains a world leader in academic cancer clinical trials, increase opportunities for patients to receive promising new treatments and support the continued improvement in outcomes for cancer patients through research.

Prior to the establishment of 3CTN there had been a significant decline in trial recruitment in Canada. Throughout its first four years, the Network successfully reversed this decline and exceeded its goal of a 50 per cent increase in recruitment, resulting in over 12,000 Canadians enrolled from 2014-2018 in clinical trials developed by Canadian researchers testing new cancer treatments.

The funding announced today is central to a \$20 million budget for 2018-2022 that 3CTN will use to build on the success of the organization’s first four years and to implement its new strategic plan. In the coming years 3CTN, together with its 44 Network sites across seven provinces, aims to see an increase in patient recruitment into clinical trials to 75 per cent above the pre-3CTN baseline. In addition to increasing patient access to clinical trials, 3CTN’s new strategic plan strives to enhance patient and public involvement, improve performance and continue to optimize the 3CTN portfolio of trials to create opportunities for new research studies.

“We are thrilled with what we have been able to achieve with our partners and look forward to continuing our work to better connect Canadian cancer patients with clinical trials,” says Dr. Janet Dancey, Scientific Director, 3CTN. “Offering these opportunities to patients can result in better treatments and outcomes and helps to advance important cancer research.”

“Both patients and research in Ontario have benefitted from 3CTN’s efforts over its first four years. Sites in Ontario have seen a more than 80 per cent increase in patient recruitment and last year alone more than 2,300 patients were recruited to multi-centre academic clinical trials in Ontario,” says Dr. Christine Williams, Deputy Director, OICR. “By increasing awareness about trials and bolstering Canada’s clinical research infrastructure, 3CTN is helping to get new therapies to patients sooner.”

“As a clinician and researcher myself, I’ve seen firsthand how important the Canadian Cancer Clinical Trials Network is in facilitating multi-centre academic clinical trials,” says Dr. Craig Earle, Vice-president, Cancer Control at the Partnership. “Our organization is pleased to continue supporting this initiative in its push to improve patient access to high-quality clinical trials, and ultimately to the best available cancer treatments.”

3CTN also announced today that Mr. Stephen Sundquist has joined the Network as its new Executive Director.

3CTN would like to acknowledge and thank its partners for their support in recognizing 3CTN's unique framework for sustaining the accomplishments and impact seen to date in building Canadian capacity for academic cancer clinical trials.

About the Canadian Cancer Clinical Trials Network

3CTN is a pan-Canadian initiative established in 2014 to improve patient access to trials and the efficiency and quality of clinical trials activities in Canada. 3CTN was created as a strategic priority of the Canadian Cancer Research Alliance to address challenges faced in Canada to conducting cancer treatment trials developed by Canadian researchers. 3CTN is responsible for hosting, maintaining and promoting access to a Portfolio of high-calibre trials across participating Network centres. The 3CTN Coordinating Centre and its partners provide further support for cancer treatment centres and hospitals by developing and providing access to a library of resources and tools that enable site researchers to improve their capacity to conduct trials, while also increasing access to trials for patients.