

# Survey results from a patient co-led priority for research and clinical practice for older adults with cancer

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### Background

- Older adults with cancer face complex and systemic barriers to care
- Caregivers also experience significant burdens
- Geriatric assessment is recommended but underused in Canada

This project is part of a multi-phase, patient and community co-led study to improve geriatric oncology services in BC.

- In **Phase 1**: 6 care and 6 research priorities were identified by conducting focus groups and interviews with 24 participants.
- Phase 2**: We validated and ranked these priorities through a province-wide survey.

### Objective

To report findings from Phase 2, which aimed to validate and rank identified care and research priorities among older adults, caregivers, healthcare providers, and community members.



### Methodology

**Study Design:** Cross-sectional online survey  
**Sample:** N=109

- Older adults (31%)
- Caregivers (19%)
- Healthcare providers (21%)
- Community (34%)

**Survey:**

- 19 items, ranking 6 care + 6 research priorities
- 5 open-ended questions

**Analysis:**

- Quantitative:** Descriptive statistics; Linear regression
- Qualitative:** Thematic analysis of open-ended responses

### Key Insights

Financial Strain

Mental Health Support

Navigating Fragmented Care

Cultural/Language Barriers

Ageism

Caregiver Burnout

### Care Priorities

Priority	Healthcare Professionals or Healthcare Worker	Older Adults Diagnosed with Cancer, Living with Cancer, or Cancer Survivor	Caregiver of an Older Adult with Cancer	Community Member or General Public
(1) Quality care from diagnosis to survivorship	2	8	8	12
(2) Financial barriers	5	10	2	10
(3) Excellent care regardless of cultural or lingual background	5	7	4	6
(4) Support for caregivers	4	2	4	1
(5) Establishing joint geriatric and oncology services	2	3	2	2
(6) Addressing social isolation	1	2	0	2

Number of Respondents (N=98)

### Research Priorities

Priority	Healthcare Professionals or Healthcare Worker	Older Adults Diagnosed with Cancer, Living with Cancer, or Cancer Survivor	Caregiver of an Older Adult with Cancer	Community Member or General Public
(1) Implementation of geriatric assessment & co-management by a healthcare team	7	10	3	5
(2) Seamless care	2	7	3	5
(3) Explore interventions to reduce age-related barriers	2	5	2	5
(4) Understand the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse individuals	4	2	2	4
(5) Factors impacting the uptake of social and community services	4	3	1	3
(6) Evaluate technology use by older adults and cancer experience	1	3	0	0

Number of Respondents (N=101)

### Results

**Top Care Priority (n=106):**

- Addressing financial barriers (e.g., medication costs, transportation, housing).
- Continuity of care.

**Top Research Priority (n=106):**

- Implementation of geriatric assessment and interdisciplinary team-based management.

### Implications

Our findings underscore the need for integrated geriatric oncology services that address financial, cultural, and systemic barriers to care. These priorities provide a foundation for developing tailored interventions and policies to improve cancer care for older adults in Canada.

### Next Steps

Co-develop geriatric–oncology interventions

Expand culturally responsive services

Policy advocacy for geriatric–oncology integration

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