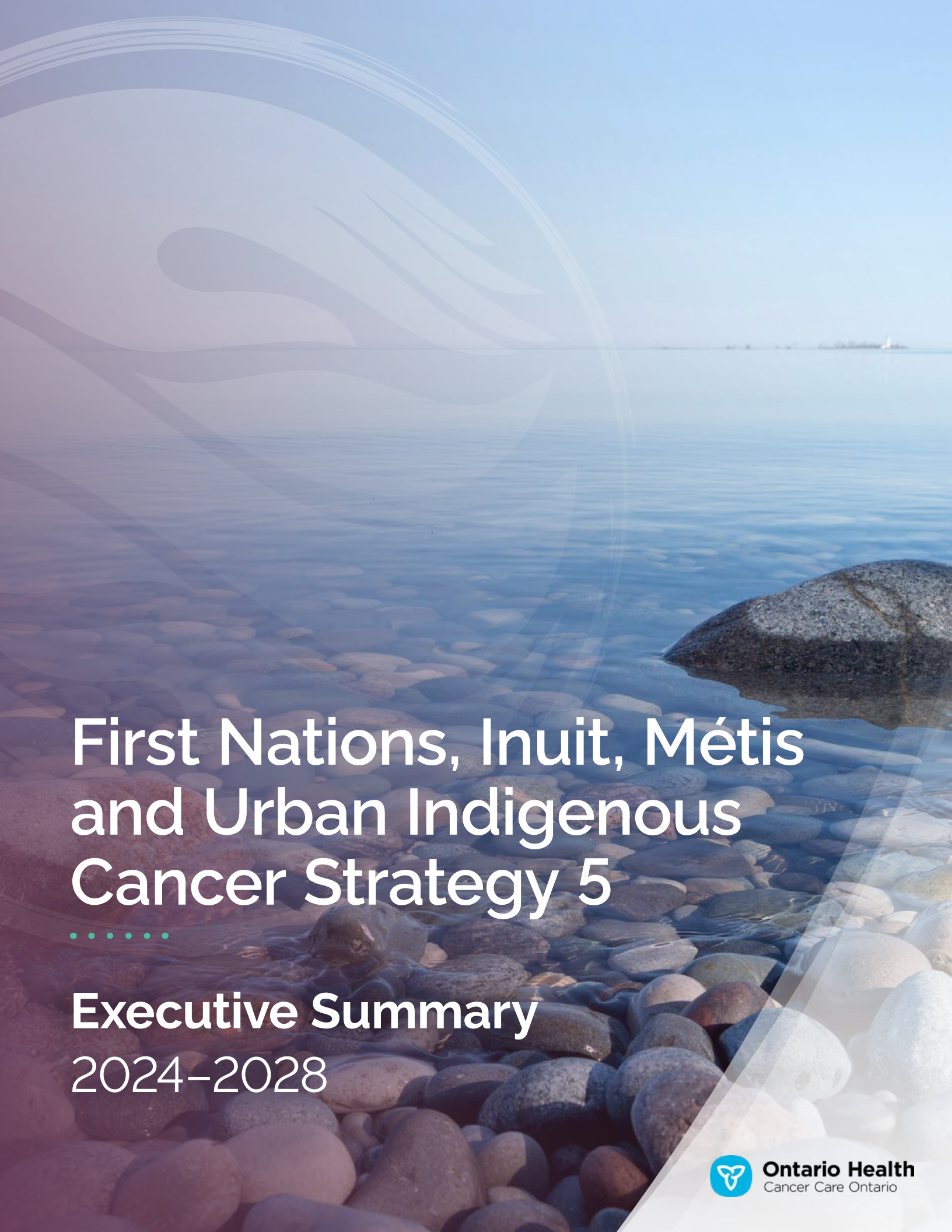




First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban Indigenous Cancer Strategy 5

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Executive Summary

2024–2028



Ontario Health
Cancer Care Ontario

The Strategy



The First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban Indigenous Cancer Strategy 5 (2024-2028) is the result of Indigenous partners coming together and working with Ontario Health to address cancer issues and to create unique and diverse health care solutions.

The First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban Indigenous Cancer Strategy 5 (2024-2028) focuses on reducing the burden of cancer and chronic disease in Indigenous people through several key approaches:

- Continuing the momentum from the fourth First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban Indigenous Cancer Strategy (2019-2023) by building on the action items through the strategic priorities for 2024 to 2028
- Addressing the chronic disease and cancer care needs of Indigenous people by incorporating the concept of wellbeing
- Promoting physical, emotional and social wellbeing, as well as ensuring comprehensive care and support individuals beyond treatment through the introduction of a new strategic priority – Survivorship
- Integrating Indigenous knowledge and traditional practice into health and chronic disease policies and programming

Ontario Health has been working with Indigenous partners to create multi-year First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban Indigenous Cancer Strategies since 2004. This fifth strategy builds on the progress achieved under its predecessors and has been designed to:

- Improve the performance of the cancer system for Indigenous people in Ontario in a way that honours Indigenous concepts of wellbeing
- Improve the wellbeing of Indigenous people in Ontario and reduce the burden of cancer in these communities
- Empower supportive and healthy environments that build on the strengths of Indigenous individuals, families, communities and organizations

Chronic Disease and Cancer in Indigenous Communities



Chronic disease has a disproportionate impact on Indigenous people in Ontario. Cancer remains a significant cause of morbidity and mortality for First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous peoples.

Addressing these interconnected factors is crucial for reducing the cancer burden and improving outcomes for First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous peoples in Ontario.

Despite the challenges Indigenous people face, First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous peoples have shown remarkable strengths-based approaches to preventing and managing chronic disease and cancer, such as:

- Cultural values and self determination: Emphasizing relationality, respect, reciprocity and wholistic health
- Traditional approaches to health and wellness: Engaging in land-based healing, ceremonies, teachings, language and the use of traditional medicines, plants and animals, while valuing Elders' knowledge and wisdom
- Community engagement and empowerment: Fostering community member support, talking and healing circles, mentorship, leadership and advocacy to drive concrete change

Build and Sustain Productive Relationships – Objectives and Actions



Build, grow, strengthen, sustain and measure relationships

- Sustain and develop new relationships and partnerships with Indigenous and health system partners to improve First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous cancer system health outcomes
- Continue to work with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous leadership, governance structures, health networks, communities and other health system partners to implement the First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban Indigenous Cancer Strategy (2024-2028), as well as subsequent Regional Indigenous Cancer Plans
- Support health system partners to develop respectful relationships that are accountable to First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous partners when addressing their cancer care needs, including regular reporting and review of the engagement process
- Work with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous partners to establish ongoing communication processes based on their guidance
- Continue to measure, evaluate and refine ways to build relationships between the health system and Indigenous people, and examine whether these relationships are improving cancer care

Support Indigenous health priorities throughout the cancer system

- Support health system partners' responses to current, evolving and new Indigenous cancer related priorities, as directed by First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous communities and organizations

- Support First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous health transformation priorities as they relate to cancer
- Engage with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous health care providers to identify best practices, address challenges and implement strategies that improve Indigenous health system outcomes

Support First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous knowledges and traditional practices in health care as guided by First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous partners

- Update information on existing cultural practices and initiatives across Ontario and support the advancement of Indigenous cultural safety with health system partners, including support for traditional health practitioners, practices and spaces, and trauma informed care
- Promote respect for, and understanding of, First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous knowledges, traditional practices and practitioners/ Knowledge Keepers
- Support Indigenous and health system partners in developing and evaluating culturally responsive protocols and processes that respect First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous knowledges and traditional practices in health care settings
- Continue to engage with Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Traditional Healers to advise and guide the work of the First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban Indigenous Cancer Strategies

Strategic Priority 2

Measure, Monitor and Evaluate – Objectives and Actions



Identify, access, generate and analyze health data

- Use data to measure, monitor and evaluate the performance of the cancer system across the cancer journey to improve health experiences, outcomes and wellbeing with and for Indigenous people
- Support Regional Cancer Programs and other Ontario Health teams in evaluating the impact of cancer programs and initiatives
- Estimate the impact of cancer and other chronic diseases on the health and wellbeing of Indigenous people and communities
- Integrate relevant research methods for generating data and developing knowledge translation products relevant to Indigenous people's cancer experiences and priorities

Support Indigenous communities and organizations in using health data for policy and program development and understanding the related implications

- Address gaps in the health system by using and sharing knowledge exchange activities with Indigenous partners
- Support Indigenous partners and communities in developing and enhancing their measure, monitor and evaluation capabilities

Explore opportunities to partner with organizations with shared health data goals

- Pursue and support access to funding opportunities for research that aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Indigenous people and communities
- Develop and sustain partnerships in Ontario and across Canada to collaborate on common initiatives

Develop, refine, implement and monitor the Ontario Health Indigenous Data Governance Matters process in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous partners

- Improve understanding of, respect for and capacity to implement First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous data sovereignty and governance principles within Ontario Health and the regions
- Work with distinct First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous partners, at their direction, to develop, refine, implement and monitor a process to support relevant First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous partners in informing and making approval decisions about Ontario Health work that proposes to involve First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous health-related data
- Support First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous partners in accessing their health-related data held at Ontario Health to advance community health priorities and community-led initiatives

Strategic Priority 3

Prevention and Wellbeing – Objectives and Actions



Reduce and prevent cancer and other chronic diseases

- Provide training to health care providers with a focus on chronic disease prevention, including cancer, to build capacity at the community level
- Establish relationships and work in collaboration with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous partners to address cancer and chronic disease prevention
- Work with Indigenous people, communities, organizations and nations to provide customized workshops, resources, education sessions and programs that focus on preventing chronic disease, including cancer, and improving overall wellbeing
- Re-establish the Path to Prevention Partnership Table and bring forward the relevant recommendations from the Path to Prevention report to address behavioural risk factors related to cancer and other chronic diseases
- Continue to promote wellbeing and healthy behaviours by identifying and developing resources that address holistic health and wellbeing

Develop and use evidence to reduce the burden of cancer and other chronic diseases and promote wellbeing

- Develop and use chronic disease prevention and behavioural risk factor data, policies and partnerships, in collaboration with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous communities and organizations, to inform and develop relevant and culturally appropriate approaches to chronic disease prevention and wellbeing
- Continue to collaborate and share knowledge with Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners about preventing cancer and other chronic diseases

Support prevention policies and develop programs to address emerging issues and trends

- Ensure that Indigenous community members and health care providers have the knowledge and tools needed to deal with emerging issues and trends, learn from their experiences and facilitate the exchange of knowledge with Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners

Strategic Priority 4

Cancer Screening – Objectives and Actions



Improve access and participation in cancer screening

- Improve access to cancer screening programs by working with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous partners to support expansion and enhancements of the programs across the province
- Continue to implement Indigenous community- and research evidence-informed recommendations to improve cancer screening participation in collaboration with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous partners
- Address barriers to cancer screening for Indigenous people and communities, including primary care and navigation supports
- Explore age eligibility requirements for cancer screening programs for Indigenous people

Improve coordination and integration of cancer screening services

- Continue to support health care providers to improve the timeliness and coordination of cancer screening and follow-up of abnormal results, reducing barriers to early cancer detection and treatment
- Support expansion of the cancer Screening Activity Report into new communities across Ontario

Support specific initiatives to improve organized cancer screening programs

- Improve colon and lung cancer screening participation among Indigenous men
- Support the Ontario Lung Screening Program through expansion and enhancements of the program across the province for Indigenous people
- Develop culturally appropriate First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous-specific cancer screening materials
- Continue to inform organized screening programs for breast, colon, cervical and lung cancer to ensure they are culturally safe and inclusive of Indigenous people addressing their unique needs

Palliative and End-of-Life Care – Objectives and Actions



Improve capacity of system to provide timely, high-quality and culturally safe palliative and end-of-life care for Indigenous patients with cancer and their families

- Continue to work with Indigenous and health system partners, including the Ontario Palliative Care Network and Regional Palliative Care Networks, to improve the coordination and integration of palliative and end-of-life care

Support strategies to improve and enhance patient, family and provider experience within the cancer system

- Continue to support patient navigation through palliative and end-of-life care
- Support the development of tools, resources, networking and training to provide health care providers, patients, family and caregivers with additional support through the cancer journey
- Support the inclusion of Indigenous patient and family voices in existing or new Patient and Family Advisory Committees
- Incorporate the meaning of palliative care from an Indigenous perspective into palliative care initiatives

Survivorship – Objectives and Actions



Support and increase awareness of cancer survivorship

- Work with partners to gather, develop and share information on cancer survivorship with Indigenous communities

Identify and develop supports for cancer survivorship

- Support the development of resources for Indigenous patients at the survivorship stage of the cancer care continuum



Strategic Priority 7

Education – Objectives and Actions



Address gaps in educational resources and program initiatives

- Measure the impact of the Indigenous Health Unit's resources to address gaps in education and program initiatives across the cancer care continuum
- Increase First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous youth audience and engagement with cancer education initiatives

Support and increase cultural awareness and safety education

- Sustain, enhance, promote and evaluate the Indigenous Relationship and Cultural Awareness courses in collaboration with Ontario Health's Learning and Development business unit
- Work with partners to gather, develop, promote and share information and training opportunities on cultural awareness and safety across the health system

Support education, training and knowledge sharing for Indigenous people, communities, organizations and Indigenous service providers

- Inform and adapt Indigenous cancer resources, training and tools for health service providers working with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous peoples
- Continue to develop and disseminate culturally responsive information and educational resources to address First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous peoples, communities, organizations and nations' emerging cancer education needs and priorities

Strategic Priority 8

Equitable Access – Objectives and Actions



Improve navigation and access

- Identify, improve and share tools and supports for successful transitions in the cancer system through prevention, screening, treatment, recovery, discharge, survivorship, or end-of-life care
- Work with other provinces to address barriers to accessing care between jurisdictions
- Identify new and existing navigational supports and ways to improve access to care, including addressing transportation, temporary accommodation (if relocated), and food needs, to help Indigenous people throughout the cancer journey
- Work with Indigenous communities and partners to advance Indigenous-led cancer care priorities

Enhance quality and improve experience of services

- Support accountability in health care that will initiate action to address infringement of patient rights when accessing care
- Work with First Nations and Inuit partners and Indigenous Services Canada to ensure the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program supports access to timely and effective cancer services and care
- Promote shared decision-making concept between First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous peoples and health care providers

Increase the provision of culturally responsive and anti-racist care

- Help cancer system partners develop relationships with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous partners to promote culturally safe and supportive care that prioritizes the unique needs of First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous people and is free of racism and discrimination in the health care system



If you have any questions regarding the First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban Indigenous Cancer Strategy 5 (2024-2028), please contact Indigenoushealth@ontariohealth.ca.

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