

# Supportive Care Needs of Men with Advanced Prostate Cancer and Their Families



CHSRF/CIHR Chair Program in  
Advanced Practice Nursing

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## THE ISSUE

The number of men living with advanced prostate cancer (APC) will increase in Canada as the population ages and new treatments prolong lives. Men with APC and their families have unique supportive care needs related to this progressive disease, often in combination with the effects of aging, and the presence of one or more disease conditions.

## THE PURPOSE

To explore and understand unmet supportive care needs of men with APC and those of their families and to obtain suggestions for improvement to supportive care service delivery.

### What did we do?

A qualitative study that looked at supportive care needs of men with APC and those of their families. Information was obtained using focus groups of 17 men with APC and 11 family members and individual interviews with 12 men and 8 family members.

### What did we find?

Men's struggle to maintain functional capacity was the greatest challenge. Family members experienced caregiver burden, isolation and the need for practical assistance.

Both patient and families identified that information is a key priority. Challenges faced by both patients and their families in obtaining information included:

- Lack of provider time
- "Rushed" appointments
- Difficulty understanding the information given to them
- Fatigue and hearing loss
- Access to information sources

### How will this research help?

This study identified priority needs for men diagnosed with APC and their families. Multiple interventions delivered by various health care professionals, including advanced practice nurses (APNs), are needed to address these care needs. APNs are in a unique position to support health care teams in regional cancer centres and to help bridge the gap between regional oncology services and supportive care services in the community.

### What's next?

Collection of data from health care providers about the current and recommended delivery of supportive care services for men with APC and their families may further inform care delivery changes.

## BOTTOM LINE

Men suffering from APC and their families have unique supportive care needs that are not being met. New approaches and models of care are needed to address these needs.

Article can be found at: Carter, N., Bryant-Lukosius, D., DiCenso, A., Blythe, J., & Neville, A. (2010). The supportive care needs of family members of men with advanced prostate cancer. *Canadian Oncology Nursing Journal*, 20(4):166-170

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