

Title: Advancing Equitable Cancer Care for Incarcerated Populations

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Complex socio-political causes continue to increase the carceral population locally and globally, with more individuals aging and dying in prisons. Despite international recognition of the importance of palliative and cancer care as a shared universal right, a health equity gap exists between the general and carceral populations in Canada. An estimated 40,000 individuals are imprisoned in Canadian correctional facilities at any time. While the data on cancer epidemiology among the prison population is scarce, the literature suggests that cancer risk factors are overrepresented in prisoners. Significant differences exist between the overall health of incarcerated individuals and their counterparts in the general population.

Aim: The aim of my doctoral research is to develop innovative strategies to promote equitable access to cancer treatment and care within and outside prisons that lead to improved patient, fiscal and health system outcomes.

Objective: I will achieve my aim of providing evidence-based recommendations for advancing equitable cancer care for the incarcerated population in BC by examining barriers in access to cancer treatment and care.

Methods: I will conduct a rapid scoping review of the literature to identify barriers to cancer treatment and care among prisoners in the Canadian context and conduct stakeholder interviews with oncology and correctional health leaders to examine the complexities of cancer management across the continuum of care in provincial prisons. In addition, I will engage in knowledge translation and dissemination that will inform policy and health service improvements.