



# KELOWNA PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT & AWARENESS GROUP

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**W**e had an excellent speaker at the February Kelowna Prostate Cancer Support & Awareness Group Meeting. Ms. Tara Daniels the Clinical Counsellor at Inspire Health’s Kelowna office came out and gave everyone present an overview of Inspire Health and the services offered. Inspire Health is a Supportive Cancer Care organization, that offers online programs that enhance the quality of life and well-being through programs and services that support the mind, body, and spirit.

Some of the programs offered include Nutrition, Exercise, Counselling and Education. This includes – different types of Yoga, Group Strength & Stretch, Cooking Classes, Mindfulness Meditation, and Qigong to mention just a few of the programs offered at Inspire Health.

All the services at Inspire health are FREE of Charge, and no doctor referral is necessary. However, prior to taking part in any of their programs you have to first be registered for their programs – you can register by phone at 1-888-734-7125, online at [www.inspirehealth.ca](http://www.inspirehealth.ca), or you can also email them for more information at [info@inspirehealth.ca](mailto:info@inspirehealth.ca).

**BC Cancer Kelowna is Home to the First of its Kind Linear Accelerator in Canada**

I had an article in my April 2022 newsletter that Kelowna was going to see the installation of a Varian ETHOS Linear Accelerator, and it was going to be the first in Canada. The installation of the linear accelerator was completed by mid December 2022, and in early January 2023 we saw information on this in the local media.

The following is information from a news release by BC Cancer January 9, 2023, as well as some information from my April 2022 article.

BC Cancer Kelowna recently announced that the first-in-Canada Ethos radiation therapy unit has been installed and uses artificial intelligence (AI) to customize treatment and adapt to daily changes in the shape and position of cancer tumours, allowing clinicians to better target the treatment and dramatically spare healthy tissue from the side effects of radiation.

“The machine will be able to adjust to daily anatomy changes, which allows radiation therapists to focus on the tumour area with tighter safety margins,” says Karen Yendley, chief radiation therapist, BC Cancer – Kelowna. “Tighter margins means that we are delivering less radiation to healthy tissue”.

Accounting for daily anatomy changes is especially important for patients with pelvic cancers that sit next to the bladder, an organ that can change in size and shape depending on how much it is filled. This change can move the prostate, for example into a different position.

Previously, any adjustments to treatment plans would be resource intensive which limits how often an adjustment could be made. “The new device will streamline and automate many of the routine tasks that clinicians undertake and allow for a new treatment plan to be generated each day in as little as 15 minutes,” says Nathan Becker, senior medical physicist, BC Cancer – Kelowna. “We can see where the tumour is today and optimize the radiation dose for what we’re seeing in real time.

This new Varian Ethos Linear Accelerator also called a LINAC replaces an older radiation therapy unit and can serve double duty as a standard radiotherapy treatment device. BC Cancer – Kelowna staff have been preparing for months to ready the system for clinical use. Extensive room renovations have opened up the treatment space, providing a more collaborative treatment environment for clinicians. The device also allows for more efficient workflow for care providers, opening the potential to treat more patients each day.

“It’s been a long time coming, this machine was Health Canada approved about a year ago,” said BC Cancer Kelowna’s Senior Medical Physicist Nathan Becker.

“We purchased the machine shortly after that, but it has taken the better part of a year to get everything ready to go ... all of the processes and the procedures to safely bring this new technology to patients in Kelowna.

Building a radiation therapy plan is a crucial and complicated part of treatment, and before ETHOS came along this process would take one to two weeks to complete. Now BC Cancer says the process could be life changing.

The Varian ETHOS has advanced artificial intelligence (AI) technology which enables a new treatment technique called adaptive radiotherapy (RT). With the advanced computation capabilities, it

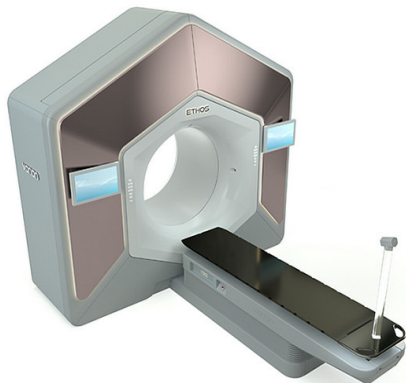
is much faster to develop a patient's treatment plan.

This new technology is a breakthrough for BC Cancer workers as they're now better equipped to help people with cancer. But according to Becker, it also gives patients a much faster and smoother experience.

"It's a less daunting machine than what we typically treat patients with, and so they're very quickly in and out of the treatment room. It's a less stressful experience right from the get-go, so it's been a great experience for patients as well."

This new linear accelerator can treat up to 35 patients a day.

This newest linac is cosmetically different from previous models and the new geometry makes this linac more efficient and patient friendly.



This state-of-the-art first in Canada piece of equipment cost in the neighbourhood of \$3 million.

## WITT'S WIT (ON THE LIGHTER SIDE) -

### The Haircut

A teenage boy had just passed his driving test and asked his father as to when they could discuss his use of the car.

The father offered his son the following deal. "You bring your grades up from a C to a B average, study your bible a little and get your hair cut. Then we'll talk about the car."

The boy thought about that for a moment, decided he'd settle for the offer and agreed on it.

After about six weeks his father said, "Son, you've brought your grades up and I've observed that you've been studying your bible, but I'm disappointed you haven't had your hair cut."

The boy said, "You know Dad, I've been thinking about that, and I've noticed in my studies of the Bible that Samson had long hair, John the Baptist had long hair, Moses had long hair, and there's even strong evidence that Jesus had long hair.

Got to love the Dad's reply -

**"Did you also notice they all walked everywhere they went."**

## Cancer Death Rate Dropping in the U.S. but Prostate Cancer Rates Increase –

The following information was obtained from several Internet sources and originated with the *American Cancer Society*. The study was published January 2023.

According to a recent study by the *American Cancer Society*, the risk of dying from cancer in the United States has fallen by nearly a third in the past thirty years.

However, for the first time in 20 years, the incidence of prostate cancer is rising. The rate of prostate cancer increased by 3% per year between 2014 and 2019. The leading cause of this overall increase was the diagnosis of advanced cases of disease, which has increased by 4% to 5% annually since 2011. The proportion of men diagnosed with distant disease has also doubled in that time frame.

A Mayo Clinic Urologist says the incidence rates of prostate cancer were high in the mid-90s or early 2000s because of a push for more screenings. However, around 2010 or so, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommended against routine prostate screenings. The recommendation came after men were diagnosed with early, slow growing cancer that was unlikely to kill them.

Because men are either not getting screened or being screened less frequently the U.S. is seeing a rise in late-stage prostate cancer.

“The concern that we’re starting to see is an increase of incidences of

later stage cancers, so more aggressive disease or metastatic disease are now more likely to be diagnosed than they were just 10 or 15 years ago,” Mayo Clinic urologist Dr. Matt Tollefson said.

The Kelowna Prostate Cancer Support & Awareness group does not recommend treatment modalities or physicians: However, all information is fully shared and is confidential. The information contained in this newsletter is not intended to replace the services of your health professionals regarding matters of your personal health.

The Kelowna Prostate Cancer Support & Awareness Group would like to thank Janssen - and TerSera for their support and educational grants that go towards our newsletters and our support group.



## UP COMING MEETING DATES FOR 2023 –

**April 8 – May 13 – June 10**

### Meeting Location:

Our meetings take place in the Harvest Room at Trinity Church located at the corner of Springfield Road and Spall Road. Please enter through the South Entrance off the main parking lot and follow the signs upstairs to the Harvest Room. Our meetings begin at 9:00 A.M. and the doors open at 8:30 A.M. There is elevator access if needed.

**NOTE:** Many of our past newsletters are available for viewing and printing through our website. – [www.kelownaprostate.com](http://www.kelownaprostate.com)

- A big *Thank You to Doris at Affordable Web Design for all her work on our website.*