

September 24, 2019

The Honourable Jim Reiter
Minister of Health, Saskatchewan

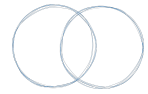
Dear Minister Reiter,

I am writing to you on behalf of the undersigned organizations and individuals in regard to current delays associated with access to Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell therapy [CAR-T].

We believe there is a willingness on behalf of payors and decision-makers to provide access to CAR T-cell therapies for paediatric and adult patients across Canada in a way that is ethical, equitable and meaningful. We also believe that we can do this in a way that is better for patients.

The initial CAR T-cell therapy [Kymriah] was approved by Health Canada in September 2018 and a recommendation was published by both CADTH and INESSS in January 2019. Once these recommendations were made public, CCO was mandated to conduct negotiations –the first time CCO has been mandated to do so. And while we are aware that this is a one-time approach, we are concerned that this process is delaying access for patients.

The disruptive nature of CAR T-cell therapy has created some much-needed discussions around processes and implementation, however, the current delay in providing access to patients means we are not actualizing the promise of CAR T-cell therapy. Paediatric and adult patients are either not receiving access to this potentially life-saving therapy or are receiving it outside the country—at costs which are above the anticipated cost of providing access within Canada for payors but which also has an important impact on the patient and their families [including travel costs, time away from work and families, etc.]. While we appreciate the complexities and uniqueness of CAR T-cell therapy, the timeliness in bringing CAR-T to patients in Canada has become unnecessarily prolonged and patients who are not eligible to either receive the therapy in a clinical trial setting or outside of the country are left without options.



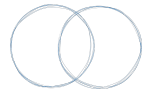
We believe that in order to create ethical, equitable and consistent access to patients, there must be clear, transparent and consistent communication amongst all stakeholders; including patient organizations and clinicians. In addition, this must remain throughout the process, including through setbacks or delays. Because patients, patient organizations and clinicians have direct experience with the therapy, they can provide valuable insight and contribution to discussions regarding value, gaps and barriers, and thoughtful insight on the delivery of CAR T-cell therapy in our current system. We need to take a holistic and collaborative approach to overcome these challenges, current or emerging, to create impact for all the stakeholders involved, but especially for patients.

We need to work together to ensure that we are creating sufficient and appropriate reimbursement for CAR T-cell therapy for pediatric and adult patients across all provinces and without any further delays. This includes appropriate eligibility criteria to receive treatment consistently and within an appropriate time frame across Canada. In a process that anticipates future cell and gene therapies and is prepared to respond to any potential clinician and patient challenges that may arise.

As such, we recommend:

- a. expediting negotiations between CCO and the manufacturer to bring CAR-T to Canada today [as such avoiding substantial cost of bringing patients to the US for treatment and ensuring that Canadian patients don't fall through the gaps]
- b. more open communication with stakeholders throughout the process
- c. a better understanding of timelines to access CAR T-cell therapy, provincial access including travel for patients and caregivers, and patient selection criteria
- d. national alignment on policy to accessing CAR T-cell therapy
- e. a process which includes registries and the collection of real-world evidence

As decision-makers, we understand the challenges you will be faced with in supporting patients and their caregivers' access to this treatment and we are fully prepared to collaborate and support you in creating solutions to bring this therapy to the patients that need it most NOW and in a way that responds to the needs of all stakeholders. We would appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss how we can be a partner in expediting reimbursement and in creating more efficiency throughout the process as future cell and gene therapies come to Canada.



Your immediate attention to this request is appreciated.

Sincerely,

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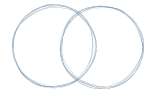
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