



The Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) is committed to helping people affected by cancer. We do this by funding important cancer research, providing reliable information about cancer, shaping healthy public policy and offering support services. Our goal is to save lives and improve the well-being of people affected by cancer. As Canada's population grows and gets older, more people are being diagnosed with cancer, so the need for cancer information and support is increasing.

In 2019, CCS started a project focused on underserved communities in Canada. This project highlights communities that have a hard time accessing cancer information and support. When people face challenges in getting the help they need, it can lead to problems in their cancer treatment, outcomes and overall experience. The main aim of this project is to find out what these communities need and how we can help them better.

CCS has identified 10 communities that are underserved. They are not the only communities underserved by CCS or the healthcare system. We have begun our work with these communities and will add more communities that are underserved over time.

- 2SLGBTQI+ communities
- adolescents and young adults with cancer
- advanced cancer
- communities that don't speak English or French
- Indigenous communities
- newcomers to Canada
- older adults
- racialized communities
- rare cancer
- rural and remote communities

We understand that some people may belong to more than one of these communities and bring those experiences with them. It's important to remember that not everyone within an underserved community faces the same problems when dealing with cancer. Each person's experience can be different. But the information we gather can help us see common trends and understand what many people in these communities might be going through. This way, we can provide better support and services that meet their needs.

We have 5 recommendations for organizations that provide cancer information and support services:

- Train your staff to understand the needs of underserved communities.
- Check if your organization is ready to work with these communities effectively.
- Get ready to engage with these communities in a meaningful way.
- Work closely with the communities to figure out their needs and what will help them.
- Create a way to measure how your services are helping these communities.

The information we gathered from this project will guide us as we work with these communities. We want to make sure our efforts are based on what works best. We've created a report that can help other organizations that provide cancer information and support services to underserved communities. We hope that by sharing our insights, we can make a positive difference in the lives of those who need it most. To learn more about this work and read the report, visit cancer.ca/HealthEquity.

We thank the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer for its support and funding, which enabled the Canadian Cancer Society to undertake this innovative work.