



Saskatchewan Prostate Assessment Pathway

Why a pathway?

Patients, families and physicians identified the need for better education for men who are diagnosed with early stage prostate cancer and for clear guidelines for physicians.

What services are provided?

The pathway provides direct (therefore faster) access to diagnostic testing for men at risk of prostate cancer, and comprehensive education and decision support for men with early-stage prostate cancer.

Who should not be referred to a Prostate Assessment Centre?

Patients who are under 40 or over 75 years of age with an elevated PSA (as determined by two separate PSA tests at least six weeks apart), or patients whose PSA value is greater than 50, should bypass the pathway and go directly to a urologist. Pathway Assessment Centre staff in Saskatoon or Regina will also refer patients to a urologist if these concerns are detected.

Is there support for me to assess my patient's risk of prostate cancer?

Yes – the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency will produce guidelines for assessing patient risk factors, and the Prostate Assessment Pathway provides physicians with an algorithm to help evaluate the need for diagnostic testing.

The pathway working group has prepared a short online tutorial to provide background on the algorithm, available at www.sasksurgery.ca/provider/prostate.html.

Should I refer all patients with risk factors to the pathway for assessment?

Not necessarily. Because of the slow growth of most prostate cancers, for patients with life expectancy less than 10 years, consider discussing with the patient whether further assessment/diagnosis/treatment is desired.

What does a Nurse Navigator do for my patient?

Nurse Navigators in the Prostate Assessment Pathway meet patients pre-biopsy (and post-biopsy if pathology is positive for early-stage prostate cancer). A Nurse Navigator can provide time, education and shared, neutral decision making to men making a treatment choice. Discussion with the Nurse Navigator helps to prepare patients for treatment consultation. Response from patients, families, and specialists has been extremely positive.

What is shared decision making?

Shared decision making involves not only educating patients, but also helping them and their families to think about values and priorities, to make an informed choice that is right for them.

How are Nurse Navigators prepared?

Nurse Navigators are experienced urology nurses who work in consultation with urologists. Nurse Navigators have comprehensive, up-to-date information on current treatments for early-stage prostate cancer, rates of complication and the pros and cons of treatments.

Who conveys results of biopsy?

With your permission, the Nurse Navigator will convey results to your patient when setting up a meeting for education and decision support. Allowing the Nurse to deliver diagnosis can be a timely option. Nurse Navigators will not convey results without the physician's approval.

Who arranges treatment consults?

After education and decision support with the Nurse Navigator, patients can:

- ask the Nurse Navigator for a referral to a urologist, and/or radiation oncologist for treatment consultation (with a feedback loop to the primary care provider); or
- return to their primary care provider for treatment discussion and referral.

Can I still refer my patient directly to a specialist?

Yes – you may continue to refer patients to a specialist for assessment. However, men who are qualified to enter the Prostate Assessment Pathway will benefit from direct, rapid access to definitive diagnosis. Also, the Pathway gives you the option to have the Nurse Navigator contact your patient promptly with his biopsy results, and expedite the treatment decision-making process. All Pathway patients will be offered the opportunity to consult a urologist after meeting with the Nurse Navigator.

Can my patient self-refer to a Prostate Assessment Centre?

The Nurse Navigator will not see patients without a referral from a practitioner.

How do my patients enter the Pathway?

When sending your patient to a Prostate Assessment Centre for assessment, you will be asked to use a Pathway-specific referral form, submitted directly to Regina or

Saskatoon. Referral forms can be found online:

www.sasksurgery.ca/provider/prostate.html

Is there support for me to educate my patients?

Yes – The Prostate Assessment Pathway has compiled comprehensive educational resources for men. Find hand-outs and web-based resources on the pathway web page at <http://www.sasksurgery.ca/patient/prostatecancer.html>

What does the Prostate Assessment Pathway provide for me and my patients?

- standardized educational resources and support for patients
- guidelines and support for family physicians to confidently assess patient risk factors for prostate cancer
- direct access to diagnostic assessment for men at risk of having prostate cancer
- comprehensive, up-to-date treatment information from specialized nurse navigators, and neutral decision support for patients.
- shorter waits for surgery/specialist consult.

How was the pathway developed?

The pathway and the accompanying tools were developed over two years by a multidisciplinary Pathway Working Group, encompassing urologists, family physicians, radiation oncologists, radiation technologists, pelvic floor physical therapists, nurses, patients, and health care administrators.

Concerns?

Your feedback about the Prostate Assessment Pathway is always welcome. Visit the prostate web pages for contact information.