

SPRING 2026

BREAKTHROUGH

PROJECTING COMFORT:

**Dr. Carlos Uribe
combines empathy
with PET/CT
innovation**

IN THIS ISSUE

**A world-first advance
in hereditary cancer
testing**

**A conversation with
BC Cancer's new chief
medical officer + more**

**BC
CANCER** FOUNDATION

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Legacy donor Richard Hewitt and his legal advisor, Sara Pedlow

ABOUT THE BC CANCER FOUNDATION

The BC Cancer Foundation is the fundraising partner of BC Cancer. A world free from cancer is closer than ever before. Together, we will make it a reality.

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OPENING REMARKS

The future of cancer research and care in B.C. is being built through donor-driven advances that are already changing the lives of patients today.

With your support, this innovation is taking shape in many ways — from new cancer centres to breakthroughs in research and leading-edge technology and treatment.

One powerful example is the Foundation's \$30 million campaign to support a second BC Cancer centre in Surrey (pg. 15). This new centre will accelerate research and deliver state-of-the-art technology, bringing world-class care closer to one of B.C.'s fastest-growing communities.

For patients like Ian Angus (pg. 9), this progress means access to life-saving research. Through BC Cancer's unique provincial network, expanded clinical trials are connecting patients across B.C. with promising new therapies — no matter where they live.

For Linda Hopkins (pg. 7), it meant long-awaited clarity. A genomics breakthrough revealed the source of her cancer-causing gene mutation, giving her family knowledge that will guide earlier screening and preventive care for generations.

For many patients, it will soon mean easier access to trusted information on exercise, nutrition and mental health support through a new BC Cancer AI-powered navigation system (pg. 13).

Inspired by his own childhood cancer experience, Dr. Carlos Uribe (pg. 4) is

transforming not only how care is delivered but how it feels. His projection-screen art initiative turned a once-blank wall into a dynamic display, surrounding patients awaiting PET/CT scans with calming imagery — from Indigenous artwork to familiar B.C. landscapes.

Thanks to your generosity, life-saving advances — from new BC Cancer centres to groundbreaking research and innovative patient supports — are reaching more patients and families across B.C. than ever before.



Sarah Roth
President & CEO
BC Cancer Foundation



Dr. Carlos Uribe's career in medical imaging was inspired by his own childhood cancer journey.

Creating a Canvas of Compassion

Dr. Carlos Uribe is the molecular imaging and therapy physics lead at BC Cancer and part of the team that helped bring a first-in-Canada Next-Generation PET/CT to Vancouver. But he was once a frightened young boy in Colombia undergoing treatment for leukemia.

"Imagine being a kid and in hospital almost every day. Everything involves needles and tubes, and then they come in with an even bigger needle to take a bit of your bone marrow. Between seven and eight years old, I basically cried every day," he says.

For a child going through cancer treatment, hospital procedures often meant pain. But some were different: he would lie on a bed while a machine created images from inside his body, helping doctors see what was happening and guide his treatment.

"When I had one of these scans, it didn't hurt. That's what made them so unique. Everything else was so painful, but this wasn't. That became the main reason I went into medical imaging. I wanted to help cancer patients avoid some of the invasive, painful procedures I went through and improve their care, diagnosis and treatment."

Dr. Uribe left home to pursue graduate studies in nuclear medicine physics at UBC. He has been at BC Cancer for over 10 years, helping expand molecular imaging and therapy, including PET/CT services, across the province.

The new scanner can image the whole body in a single frame, delivering clearer images with less radiation. It will also give researchers an opportunity to develop radiopharmaceutical drugs that deliver more precise treatment with fewer side effects.

Funded in part by \$6.1 million from BC Cancer Foundation donors, the new PET/CT in Vancouver is a dream come true for Dr. Uribe and his team.

While the new PET/CT can reduce scan time from up to 40 minutes to as little as two minutes, patients still need to rest quietly for about 45 minutes before their scan while a small amount of radioactive tracer travels through the body to highlight areas doctors need to see.

"For many, that waiting period can be filled with anxiety and uncertainty as they wait to learn whether they have cancer or their disease has changed."

Dr. Uribe understands that emotional weight personally. He remembers how much small comforts mattered during long days in hospital, when even brief distractions, such as cartoons, could make the experience feel more bearable.

This memory inspired a simple, deeply personal idea: make the PET/CT waiting space feel less clinical and more humane.

Dr. Uribe transformed a blank, grey wall into a large projection screen to bring moments



Dr. Uribe, a year before he was diagnosed with leukemia.

of calm, beauty and connection to patients while they wait. Some of the first works projected were created in partnership with First Nations artists, whose vibrant designs helped make the room feel more welcoming.

Dr. Uribe has also contributed his own work, including a video of the flowing Coquitlam River accompanied by birdsong. Over time, he hopes the space will continue to evolve, with new nature scenes, artwork and community contributions that can offer patients comfort in different ways.

Grounded in a lesson he carries from his own childhood cancer journey, Dr. Uribe says, "We can't take away the worry or fear that comes with a cancer scan, but we can try to ease the burden and make these moments a little easier to get through."

To support BC Cancer's Technology Transformation, a suite of best-in-class imaging, diagnostics and high-precision radiation technology, please contact Rhea Siu at 604.675.4108 or rhea.siu@bccancer.bc.ca

Dr. Uribe in front of the projection screen he created to help calm patients awaiting a PET/CT.



Advancing Early Detection and Prevention in Hereditary Cancer



“It’s the biggest advance in hereditary cancer testing technology in decades, and it will transform cancer prevention for generations,”

— Dr. Kasmintan Schrader, co-medical director of BC Cancer’s Hereditary Cancer Program

A groundbreaking made-in-B.C. blood test is transforming how families understand inherited cancer risk — eliminating unnecessary testing on one side of a family while bringing life-saving clarity to the other.

With BC Cancer Foundation support, BC Cancer scientists have developed a world-first technology, Parent-of-Origin-Aware Genomic Analysis (POAga) which can determine, with 98% accuracy, whether a cancer-causing gene mutation was inherited from a patient’s mother or father — using only a single blood sample.

Until now, determining which side of a family carries a mutation has required testing multiple relatives on both sides — something that is often difficult or impossible if parents are no longer living, unwilling or unavailable to test, or biological family history is unknown.

POAga changes that.

Inherited mutations such as BRCA1 and BRCA2, which increase the risk of breast, ovarian, prostate and pancreatic cancer, account for about 10% of all cancers.

By pinpointing which parent a mutation came from, the test immediately focuses attention where it matters most, clarifying risk for one side of a family while relieving uncertainty, stress and worry for the other, and dramatically improving the efficiency of genetic screening across the health-care system.

For relatives who may carry the mutation, this insight enables access to genetic testing, earlier screening and preventive care that can stop cancer before it starts.

To support a \$6 million campaign to expand POAga and make it accessible to more families across B.C., contact Elissa Morrisette at 604.707.5992 or elissa.morrisette@bccancer.bc.ca



For Linda Hopkins, POAga provided long-awaited clarity and a clear path forward.

Linda’s sister was already facing ovarian cancer when Linda was diagnosed with early stage pancreatic cancer. “Between my sister and I, for two years it was a mess,” she says.

“I went from being a very active person to learning that I had pancreatic cancer as well as a gene mutation that put me and my family at greater risk. I developed a lot of anxiety, which I had never had in my life.”

It didn’t come as a complete surprise to Linda when she learned she carried the BRCA2 mutation, as her sister had already tested positive. But POAga predicted that the mutation came from her mother — who had passed away years earlier — allowing Linda to alert relatives on that side of the family so they can pursue genetic testing and earlier screening.

Linda’s genetic counsellor at BC Cancer offered to contact her Canadian relatives on her mother’s side. And Linda has also reached out to family in Ireland to let them know they, too, could face an elevated risk of developing cancer.

This knowledge is powerful, because early detection can save lives. As it did with Linda.

After surgery to remove her pancreas and six months of chemotherapy, Linda is now, incredibly, cancer-free.



Early detection saved Linda Hopkins’ life — now a BC Cancer advance in hereditary cancer is giving her family clarity about their risk to act earlier.

In a pilot POAga study focused on pancreatic cancer, blood samples from just nine patients helped determine hereditary risk for 188 extended relatives.



Clinical Trials Come Home

Dr. Bernie Eigl, founder of BC Cancer's Clinical Trial Office.

In the past, participating in a clinical trial often meant travelling — or temporarily relocating — to a major urban cancer centre. Thanks to donor support, BC Cancer is expanding clinical trial access in the North, Island, Interior and Fraser regions, bringing promising new therapies closer to where patients live.

It's good news for patients across the province — even if they're not enrolled in a study, says Dr. Bernie Eigl, founder of BC Cancer's Clinical Trial Office.

"With clinical trials available at every BC Cancer centre, staff are trained in the best standard of care and every patient benefits because the whole team is practicing at the highest level."

One network, province-wide access

BC Cancer runs one of Canada's busiest clinical trial programs, with 10% of B.C. cancer patients enrolled in studies — made

possible in large part thanks to donor investments, that helped launch and sustain BC Cancer's Provincial Clinical Trials program.

Participation is strengthened by B.C.'s unique model, where cancer centres operate as one coordinated network rather than independent institutions.

"It's something you don't see anywhere else in Canada," says Dr. Eigl.

A centralized research infrastructure manages the complex administrative work behind trials — from contracts and budgets to ethics approvals — allowing clinicians across the province to focus on patient care.

The model also helps expand trials to more communities. When pharmaceutical companies limit the number of Canadian sites in international studies, BC Cancer can open a trial at one centre and extend it to others as satellite locations.

"While I might lead a study in Vancouver, colleagues in Victoria or Kelowna can also enroll patients locally — and vice versa," explains Dr. Eigl.

New initiatives are expanding access even further. Through the Canadian Remote Access Framework for Clinical Trials (CRAFT) program, BC Cancer researchers are using virtual care and telehealth to assess and monitor patients who live far from major cancer centres.

Powered by Donors

Donor support is helping bring cutting-edge clinical trials to patients across B.C.

Philanthropy helped launch BC Cancer's first CAR-T trial for leukemia and lymphoma, where 43% of participants — all of whom had exhausted other treatment options — achieved complete regression.

Donors are also contributing \$2.2 million to support SIMPLIFY, an international trial led at BC Cancer — Prince George and offered across all six BC Cancer centres. The study is testing a single, high-precision radiation dose designed to better target tumours, reduce side effects and improve remission rates for people with metastatic cancer.

Donor funding will also help strengthen the clinical trials system — the backbone that enables BC Cancer to open, manage and expand trials across the province — with a goal of increasing participation by 10% each year.



Ilan Angus and his family.

Extra years from innovation

Ilan Angus doesn't have to think very hard about what he would have missed without access to life-saving clinical trials at BC Cancer.

"Everything," he says of his three grandchildren — "Henry, now six; Audrey in the middle; and Sidney the youngest at just over a year old."

Diagnosed with colon cancer in 2014 and initially given only a few years to live, Ilan has since enrolled in multiple trials. Now, years later, he believes cutting-edge research is the reason he's still here — enjoying precious time with his grandchildren.

"Trials made it possible for us to be all together."

BC CANCER CLINICAL TRIALS BY THE NUMBERS

- **399 active trials across B.C.** (as of January 2026)
- **135 new trials** launched since 2024
- **178 trials** currently recruiting patients
- **388 clinician investigators** driving research
- **600–700 patients** enrolled each year in intervention trials (testing new drugs)
- **18,000 patients** approached to participate in trials over the last five years
- **92% of patients** offered a trial chose to participate
- **70%+ participants** accessed a trial within 50 km of their home

To help increase access to clinical trials at all six BC Cancer centres, contact **Elissa Morrisette at 604.707.5992 or elissa.morrisette@bccancer.bc.ca**

TURNING LOSS INTO *a Legacy of Hope*



Richard and his legal advisor, Sara, work together to ensure his legacy gift has meaningful impact.

“Prior to Lee’s illness, I didn’t even have a will,” admits Richard Hewitt, who despite being a long-time donor, hadn’t considered leaving a legacy gift to the BC Cancer Foundation.

That changed after Richard met legal advisor Sara Pedlow at a BC Cancer Foundation event, and she explained the benefits to both Richard’s estate and in sustaining future cancer research and care.

“People are often surprised that they can include a charity alongside family and friends, and there’s flexibility in how to structure a gift or that it can be tied to a specific purpose.”

— Sara Pedlow, legal advisor

“Most individuals have a sense of how they wish to allocate their assets amongst their loved ones but it’s less common for them to have established ideas about legacy giving — even if they have given generously to charities throughout their lives,” says Sara.

This resonated with Richard, who first began donating to the BC Cancer Foundation after his first wife, Margot, faced Hodgkin lymphoma in 1969 when they were still dating.



After losing Lee to a rare cancer, Richard is leaving a legacy gift to advance BC Cancer research.

After Richard and Margot separated in the ‘80s, they remained good friends and over the years Richard has continued to support cancer research — eventually through groundbreaking immunotherapy and its success in treating blood cancers — in her honour.

After Lee, Richard’s partner of 35 years, passed away in 2023, six months after being diagnosed with a rare endometrial cancer, he created the Lee Currell Gynecologic Cancer Research Fund.

A former nurse, dedicated volunteer at the Vancouver Sun Run and Rogue Folk Club and an avid pickleball player, Lee made friends wherever she went, says Richard. Thanks to her generous network, the fund has already raised almost half of its \$500,000 goal.

“When I first started Lee’s fund, I never imagined it would intersect with my previous support of immunotherapy research,” says Richard.

“But now with CAR T-cell therapy showing real promise in treating ovarian cancer, it’s coming together in a way that feels magical. Including a legacy gift in my will to the BC Cancer Foundation is how I can help ensure this work continues — and that Lee’s legacy, and the hope it represents, carries forward.”

“This is the power of legacy giving,” says Sara. “A gift in your will is a final opportunity to focus not on what you have, but on what you can achieve.”

LEAVING A LEGACY GIFT 101

Everyone can make an impact.

Even modest estates — last year, BC Cancer Foundation donors collectively contributed more than \$20 million through their estate plans.

Build in flexibility. You can include a specific gift amount through your estate, or include a percentage of your estate which provides added flexibility.

Give in different ways. Consider cash, securities, registered plans like RRSPs or TFSA, insurance policies or other assets.

Start a conversation. Speaking with a charitable organization ensures your wishes are honoured and creates a meaningful partnership with lasting impact.

Get expert advice. Your lawyer, financial planner or tax advisor can help structure a legacy gift that supports both your goals and your overall estate plan.

To learn more about leaving a legacy gift to advance cancer research and care in B.C., please contact Jordan McClymont at 250.415.1888 or jordan.mcclymont@bccancer.bc.ca

STRONGER THROUGH SUPPORTIVE CARE



“Our work begins at diagnosis, supporting patients through every step of their cancer experience — preparing them for treatment, helping them stay stronger during it and recover afterward,”

— Dr. Lauren Capozzi

For Dr. Lauren Capozzi, BC Cancer’s first cancer psychiatrist — a medical doctor specializing in pain management and rehabilitation — supportive care starts with understanding what matters most to patients.

For example, one man living with metastatic prostate cancer hopes to walk his daughter down the aisle this year. He and Dr. Capozzi are working to make that moment possible.

In addition to a growing rehabilitation program, BC Cancer supportive care includes mental health support, and teams across B.C. are collaborating to

ensure patients feel supported physically and mentally throughout their cancer journey.

Building a new model of cancer rehab

Dr. Capozzi leads BC Cancer’s new provincial rehabilitation program but notes the name does not fully capture its scope.

One of only nine cancer psychiatrists in Canada, she brings experience from Ontario and Alberta, where rehab is fully integrated into cancer care. Upon opening, her clinic at BC Cancer — Kelowna filled immediately — reflecting the significant need for this critical support.

The new program brings together psychiatry (physical rehab and rehab specialists), physiotherapy, occupational therapy, exercise physiology, nutritional support and speech pathology to treat cancer and treatment-related side effects including lymphedema, nerve injuries, joint and muscle pain, fatigue and cognitive changes.

With donor support, Dr. Capozzi is expanding her team and building a more accessible, coordinated rehabilitation program across the province.

Up to 90% of cancer patients benefit from rehabilitation and exercise programming.

Colorectal cancer research shows structured exercise reduces the risk of recurrence.

Helping patients find support faster

Artificial intelligence (AI) is also opening new possibilities in supportive care. Dr. John-Jose Nunez, a psychiatrist and computer scientist at BC Cancer, is developing AI models to connect people with support earlier in their care journey. One model can predict mental health needs from a patient’s first oncology appointment with more than 70% accuracy.

This success led to a broader question: how could AI improve supportive care for every patient? His team identified a critical gap: navigation. Many patients struggle to find reliable resources, and only 11% access existing supportive care tools on their own.

To support a \$2 million fundraising campaign to help expand supportive care programs at BC Cancer, contact Becky Yost at 604.707.5926 or becky.yost@bccancer.bc.ca

The team is developing a chat-style AI Supportive Care Navigator to help provide personalized resources to common questions such as:

What support is available for emotional trauma after cancer?

Can I safely exercise after breast cancer surgery?

What can I eat to help with nausea?

Creating spaces built for healing

Donor support has also helped create new dedicated supportive care spaces in Vancouver and Victoria, including the Ernie & Yvonne Yakimovich Integrated Care and Research Pavilion. By bringing services together in a welcoming environment — away from treatment such as radiation and chemotherapy — these spaces help patients access care more seamlessly.

New supportive care spaces serve nearly 20,000 patients each year.

“Donors are making BC Cancer’s vision for supportive care a reality,” says Dr. Alan Bates, BC Cancer’s Provincial Medical Director for Supportive Care.

With expanded clinical teams, AI-powered tools and dedicated supportive care spaces taking shape, BC Cancer is creating a more connected and compassionate system, ensuring patients receive support earlier and throughout every stage of care.

DR. PARIS-ANN INGLEDEW ON THE FUTURE OF CANCER CARE IN B.C.

BC Cancer's new chief medical officer on how donor support is expanding research, treatment and access to care across the province.

You've worked at three of BC Cancer's six centres. How does that perspective shape your leadership today?

"Having worked at BC Cancer – Surrey, Abbotsford and Vancouver I can say with certainty that every centre has its own unique culture and attributes, but all are connected by a common thread of applying research, technology and innovation to ensure the best care for all patients. In addition to working at these centres, I also grew up in Kelowna, another community served by one of our centres. As we open new cancer spaces across B.C., I am excited to bring exceptional world class care to many more patients closer to home."

Why is the BC Cancer Foundation's partnership so important to BC Cancer?

"It's essential. Government funding allows us to deliver standard of care, but philanthropy helps us move faster, think bigger and drive meaningful change. Cancer care is challenging, but the Foundation's dedicated donor community are a bright light that inspires and motivates us in our work."

Can you share examples of donor-funded advances that are changing care?

"Donor investment is helping BC Cancer expand immunotherapy and CAR-T therapy – one of the most promising areas in



Dr. Paris-Ann Ingledew.

cancer care – while also advancing precision oncology, genomics and AI-driven research.

The Foundation's support in acquiring a Next-Generation PET/CT and cutting-edge precision radiation technologies is allowing us to deliver more accurate treatment, often in fewer visits with fewer side effects, which makes a meaningful difference for patients. These innovations simply wouldn't be possible without philanthropy."

How does donor support help more patients across B.C. access leading-edge cancer care?

"Donors help us create change on a system-wide level. One powerful example is the expansion of clinical trials. Donor support helps make trials available at BC Cancer centres across the province, so more patients can access leading-edge care closer to home. And when those trials succeed, they improve care not just in B.C. but worldwide."



A New BC Cancer Centre in Surrey

The second BC Cancer centre in Surrey will be a groundbreaking facility that will transform cancer research and care across B.C., and expand access to innovation and emerging therapies, such as theranostics and immunotherapy, for patients in the Fraser region.

11,000+ each year in the Fraser region – the highest in B.C.
New cancer diagnoses

2x Surrey's population growth nearly doubled Vancouver's last year.

ESTIMATED ANNUAL CARE AT THE NEW CENTRE	EXPANDED TREATMENT CAPACITY	LEADING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY
105,000 ambulatory oncology visits	54 new chemotherapy chairs, doubling current capacity in the region	Space for 6 linear accelerators for advanced radiation therapy
50,000 radiation therapy visits	Shorter wait times and less travel to other centres for treatment	2 state-of-the-art PET/CT scanners
22,000 chemotherapy visits		A cyclotron to produce medical isotopes for imaging and treatment

ACCELERATING TOMORROW'S CANCER CARE


As BC Cancer's first purpose-built facility for brachytherapy and theranostics – two fields revolutionizing cancer treatment – the new centre will include:

A state-of-the-art brachytherapy suite – B.C.'s first designed for MRI-guided treatment – delivering targeted internal radiation therapy aided by the most advanced imaging method available.

A new cyclotron to drive research in theranostics – the combination of diagnostics and therapeutics to target cancer cells with high precision – positioning Surrey as a leader in molecular imaging and nuclear medicine.

POWERED BY YOUR SUPPORT

A \$30 million BC Cancer Foundation campaign will equip the new centre with leading-edge technology and advance life-saving cancer research. To learn more or donate contact Scott MacDonald at 778.874.6017 or scott.macdonald@bccancer.bc.ca



Dr. Julian Smazynski
BC Cancer Scientist

THE FUTURE OF CANCER CARE **STARTS WITH YOU**

Legacy giving creates a lasting impact, funding breakthroughs for generations to come.



Get in touch to learn more:

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