

## Multidisciplinary TEAM Approach Backgrounder

### Multidisciplinary cancer care

A multidisciplinary medical team is comprised of healthcare professionals from diverse disciplines whose goal of providing optimal patient care is achieved through coordination and communication with one another. A multidisciplinary team provides a continuum of care for cancer patients through diagnosis, treatment, recovery and survivorship.

The paradigm of a patient consulting a multidisciplinary medical team has been an established standard approach in treating other cancers such as breast, colon and lung cancer. Properly qualified urologists should be involved in all aspects of the care of a patient with prostate cancer, including initial referral, diagnosis and subsequent management – but patients also often require the expertise of other disciplines to provide optimal care. Improving communication among urologists, radiation oncologists and medical oncologists to develop an optimal treatment plan at every stage of the disease can benefit the patient in determining the best course of treatment.

### It's a TEAM Approach

It's a **TEAM Approach: Prostate Cancer Treatment, Education, Awareness and Management** is a national awareness initiative that aims to make men with prostate cancer aware of the importance of seeking advice from a multidisciplinary team of physicians – a urologist, a radiation oncologist and a medical oncologist – to ensure that all available treatment options are fully explored so that an optimal treatment plan may be implemented.

The ongoing initiative reinforces the importance of a multidisciplinary team and the increasing collaboration of medical specialists in the management of advanced disease. Unlike with other cancers, men with prostate cancer often do not seek the advice of a medical oncologist until their cancer has progressed to a late stage in the disease.

A man with prostate cancer may avoid delay of optimal treatment by consulting a urologist, radiation oncologist and medical oncologist. These healthcare professionals can each make him aware of different available treatment options.

### Expanding the TEAM Approach

*It's a TEAM Approach* began in 2004, in coordination with the Prostate Cancer Foundation's release of the first-ever *Report to the Nation on Prostate Cancer*, to raise awareness of the importance of a multidisciplinary team of medical specialists for the treatment of prostate cancer.

In 2005, this program was expanded to highlight the importance of caregivers and address their role in helping loved ones become more informed and make optimal treatment decisions. Both patient and prostate cancer organizations participated in a TEAM Approach advocacy group roundtable and developed a consensus statement affirming the need for a multidisciplinary team in the management of prostate cancer and strengthening partnerships throughout the prostate cancer community.

In 2006, the *Expanding the TEAM Approach* roundtable discussed opportunities for increasing collaboration of a multidisciplinary team of specialists.

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**The TEAM Approach in the Management of Prostate Cancer  
Get on Par with Prostate Cancer  
Questions to Ask Your Doctors**

**Questions to ask your urologist:**

- How do you feel I'm doing on my current treatment?
- Is my PSA number rising? If so, does that mean my current treatment has stopped working?
- What other treatment options are available to me?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?
- What are the side effects of these treatments?
- Which treatment option is right for me?

**Questions to ask your oncologist:**

- What treatment options would you recommend for my type and stage of prostate cancer?
- How successful has this treatment been for other people like me?
- What are the benefits and risks of this treatment?
- Will there be long-term side-effects?
- How can I best manage the side effects?