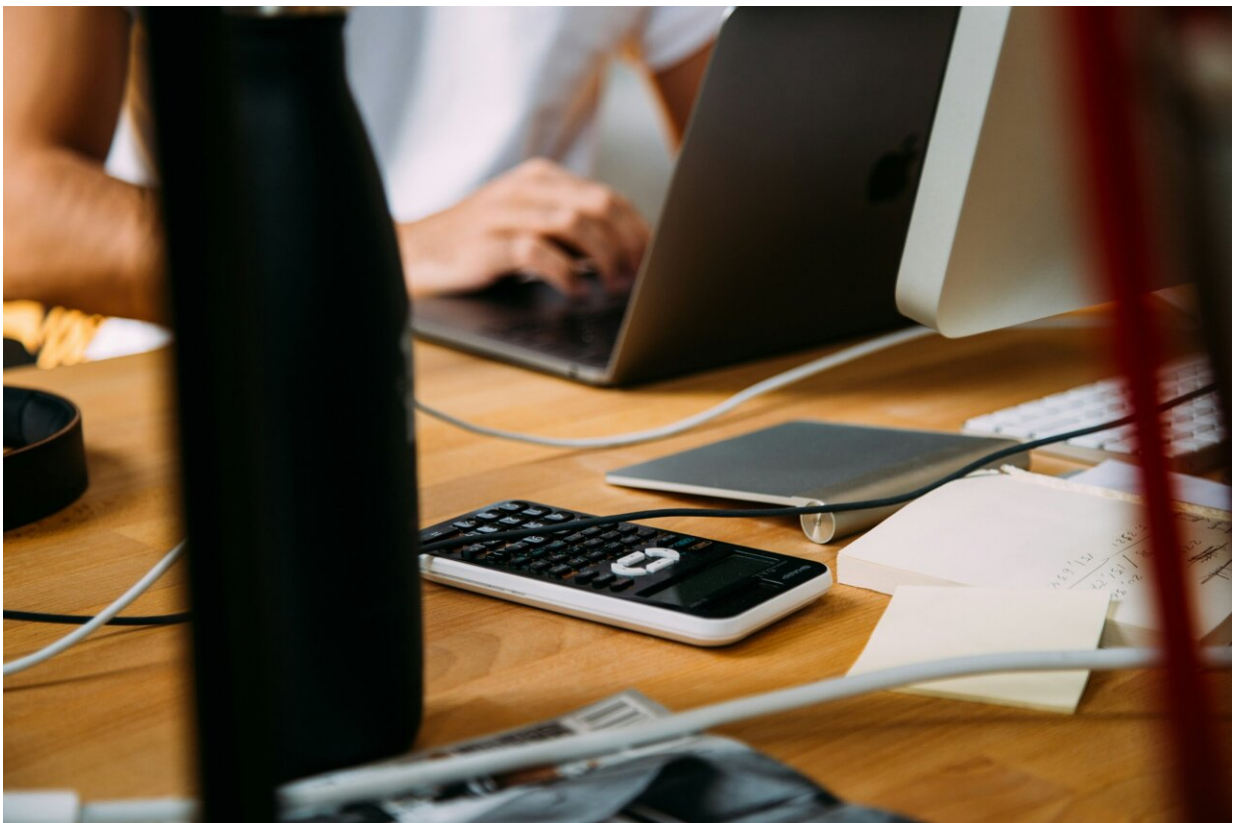


Financial toxicity found to affect at least one-third of Canadian patients with cancer

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At least one-third of Canadians diagnosed with cancer experience financial distress, called "financial toxicity," which adds to the burden of the diagnosis, write authors in a commentary [published](#) in *Canadian Medical Association Journal*.

"Financial toxicity, which refers to the direct, indirect, and emotional costs to patients following a [cancer diagnosis](#), is increasingly recognized as a risk factor for poor health and cancer outcomes," writes Dr. Rachel Murphy, University of British Columbia and BC Cancer Research Institute, Vancouver, British Columbia with co-author Truman Wood.

Many take-home cancer drugs are not funded by provincial health plans, and only 60% of people in Canada have private plans that may fund these drugs. Additional financial burdens include home care costs, parking fees for the many hospital visits, travel and accommodation costs for treatments for people who live outside major centers, reduced income, and [child care](#) and other costs.

"Financial toxicity is a contemporary issue in Canadian cancer care that has the potential to overwhelm a large number of people, given projected increases in cancer incidence in Canada, the high costs of novel cancer treatments, and rising costs of living," write the authors.

Suggestions to reduce financial burden include federal and provincial support for home care and medical equipment, improved benefit plans for sick leave and disability benefits, and pharmacare support. Additionally, cancer centers could offer patient navigation programs to connect people with supportive services and consider parking fee relief and transportation services for patients with financial need.

"People on low incomes are at greatest risk of financial burden and

related consequences, including poorer health outcomes. Calls for health system innovation and transformation must not overlook the need for supports to manage the financial burden of cancer for patients and their families," the researchers say.

More information: Tackling financial toxicity related to cancer care in Canada, *Canadian Medical Association Journal* (2024). [DOI: 10.1503/cmaj.230677](https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.230677) , www.cmaj.ca/lookup/doi/10.1503/cmaj.230677

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