

Information needs of cancer policy/ planning stakeholders on just published screening trial outcomes

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Information Needs of Cancer Policy/Planning Stakeholders on Just Published Screening Trial Outcomes

- Key Stakeholders who have the need for timely information:
 - Screening programs - for keeping up to date and planning and dealing with questions
 - Policy and planners in screening services - in cancer agencies and health ministries
 - Specialty group leaders - dependent on which screening test has been evaluated

What can occur when a major screening trial publishes results(from a provincial cancer agency perspective)

SCENARIO 1:

- The agency's first awareness of the publication is from the media - a journalist seeking a cancer agency's response to the article
 - Tight deadline - "for the news this evening"
 - If embargoed for release the next day or 2 - they will share the article, and give you a couple of hours before interviewing you
 - Thus begins a mad dash to meet the needs of the media and also seize the opportunity to provide some balanced, objective perspective to the issue..... But how?

What occurs when a major screening trial publishes results (from a provincial cancer agency perspective)

SCENARIO 2:

- Your cancer agency has not been approached in advance of a publication by media and the story about a screening trial is headline news, with the perspective of a few prominent physicians advocating screening, even though it is not so clearly supported... This creates confusion in the public. (and a good news story!)
- You need to clarify just what the trial evidence means and doesn't mean for your local stakeholders as a credible source of information for patients, providers, and others. You start by searching for the journal article....is there someone who can read it and summarize it and put it into a broader perspective?

And advice is freely given.....

NATIONAL
POST

- “ Yes, they may produce false positives and some physicians are reluctant to conduct them unless the patient's history indicates he is in a risk group. But if a patient asks for a PSA test then the doctor is almost certain to comply.**
- “ ‘Just tell your physician your neighbour who is about the same age said he had one and you want one anyway even if the doctor says you face little risk,’ says Dr.Vesprini.”**

What occurs when a major screening trial publishes results (from a provincial cancer agency perspective)

SCENARIO 3:

- Your cancer agency receives a request 1 week after the PSA publications to provide a briefing summary on the new trial results published on the PSA test, including potential issues.
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- This has been requested by the Ministry of Health who has received a demand from a local advocacy group to meet the next week with the Minister of Health to discuss the need, based on the new evidence, for a publicly funded prostate screening program.

What would be very useful to address this situation

- In order to support these key stakeholders - timely, unbiased, and easier to read and understand information than medical journal articles at hand for responding to inquiries about the studies and their results and implications for health policy and planning,
- knowledge translation processes are required which are **intermediate in intensity** between a quick scan and short summary of the articles once (as is carried out by some “journal watch” services) and the more time-consuming systematic review of the literature pertaining to the screening intervention - which can take months to complete.

**Anticipatory Science - creating a
shared understanding of new
screening evidence “just in time”**

Anticipatory Science - Screening

Ad-hoc Expert Panels - Purpose

To have an understanding of the literature and state of evidence related to a new technology/ randomized controlled trial evidence - before and/ or very shortly after the trial is published

- in order to:

- 1) proactively address the issue
- 2) respond to questions from the the media and
- 3) requests for information from key stakeholders, including funders of health services (e.g. government health ministries)

Anticipatory Science - Screening Overall Strategy

1. Identification of an issue on which new significant information is imminent (e.g. outcomes of a major randomized trial about to be published)
2. The issue is important and cross-cutting
3. A process is developed to provide factual background to the issue including different perspectives through multidisciplinary adhoc panels - drawing on experts across the country
 - Review accumulated evidence on key aspects of screening intervention, including benefits and limitations
 - Discuss implications for practice and policy making, including health human resources
 - Consolidate a collective understanding of key scientific findings and implications and produce a written summary

Anticipatory Science - Screening Overall Strategy

4. Presentation of the information would try to assist and not dictate interpretation - a summary statement or conclusion of the panel is included if there is agreement among panel members
5. The output IS NOT a clinical guideline; if the panel can agree, summary concluding statements are made about the findings and their implications for practice
6. The draft document (before trial results are published) and final document (including published results) are distributed to a list of key screening policy/planning stakeholders across the country.

Recent addition to the Document Production

- In addition to the production of summary documents by adhoc expert panels made up of national experts from a number of perspectives: clinical, population health, cancer screening programs, primary care, epidemiology,
- what additional actions would be useful to support planning deliberations?

A potential model of a Canadian process to address new trial evidence for promising screening tests?

- The example of lung cancer screening

Screening For Lung Cancer

Further activities to address this issue since Anticipatory Science reports

- The expert panel had no clear consensus about implications of the trials in terms of recommending moving forward with screening programs - recommended more stakeholder/expert discussion



2 Lung Cancer Screening Forums of key experts/stakeholders across the country have been held

- November 22, 2011 - Toronto
- February 29, 2012 - Vancouver
- Purpose:
 - To facilitate Canadian cancer control leaders and policymakers to work together in developing an informed approach to addressing emerging issues in lung cancer screening.
 - The first meeting of pan Pan-Canadian Lung Cancer Screening Network (PLCSN) will take place on **October 25, 2012** in Toronto, ON.

Summary

- New evidence from randomized controlled trials can inform policy and planning decisions about screening - practical implications of screening need to be flagged along with the results
- Getting the information out to the right people in the right format to meet their needs in a timely fashion is the purpose of CPAC's anticipatory science initiative
- The use of key stakeholder forums following the completion of summary documents has facilitated a shared understanding of the evidence and implications for programs and practice across the country
- All of the documents are on the CPAC website to facilitate access