

## **Patient Organizations Welcome Approval of Six Life-Extending Cancer Treatments Through Ontario's FAST Program, Urge National Expansion**

**TORONTO, Jan. 23, 2026** — Leading patient organizations are welcoming Ontario's announcement that [six cancer drugs are now being fast-tracked for public funding through the province's Funding Accelerated for Specific Treatments \(FAST\) program](#), calling it an important step forward for cancer patients and a model other provinces and territories should follow.

The Colorectal Cancer Resource & Action Network (CCRAN), in collaboration with a coalition of national patient organizations, applauds Ontario's leadership in accelerating access to life-extending cancer treatments, enabling patients to receive promising therapies sooner and reducing the lengthy delays that have long characterized public drug funding in Canada.

Patient advocates say this milestone highlights the importance of reducing the time between regulatory approval and public coverage.

*“The approval of these six cancer drugs through Ontario’s FAST program is a meaningful step forward for patients and their loved ones,” said Filomena Servidio-Italiano, President and CEO of CCRAN. “By accelerating public funding, Ontario demonstrates that patients, who are at the center of cancer care, can gain access to life-extending treatments sooner, without compromising the evidence that guides funding decisions. We encourage the program’s continued expansion and urge other provinces and territories to follow this example.”*

Cancer remains the leading cause of death in Ontario and across Canada. Patients often wait close to two years after Health Canada approval before new medicines are publicly funded, leading to delays that can limit treatment options and harm patient outcomes. Through fast-tracked access to cancer therapies, Ontario is helping close this gap and setting a new national standard for timely access.

*“As a patient advocate and a stage 4 colorectal cancer patient myself, I am thrilled to hear this announcement by the Government of Ontario,” said Steve Slack. “When it comes to cancer care, time is of the essence. With this announcement, cancer patients in Ontario who need to access these life-extending therapies will be able to do so much quicker than before. This will improve outcomes for cancer patients in the province. I look forward to future announcements by the Ontario government related to additional cancer therapies being approved for access through the FAST program.”*

Clinicians echo the need to access life-extending drugs sooner rather than later:

*“I applaud the Government of Ontario for continuing to move the FAST program forward and for recognizing how urgently patients need access to new cancer therapies,” said Dr. Michael Raphael, GI Medical Oncologist at the Odette Cancer Centre, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, and Assistant Professor, Division of Medical Oncology, University of Toronto. “In my clinic, I see firsthand how faster access to breakthrough treatments can ease uncertainty for patients and families, expand their treatment options, and offer meaningful hope at a critical time.”*

CCRAN and its partner organizations are encouraged by Ontario’s commitment to fast-track additional cancer drugs in the coming months and support the continued expansion of the FAST program to benefit more patients across tumour types. While the program currently prioritizes select cancer drugs deemed ‘high priority’, patient groups emphasize that timely access to the most appropriate treatment is critical for every individual facing a cancer diagnosis. Advocates hope to see more therapies advanced through the FAST program, recognizing that for cancer patients, time is precious.

Patient groups also urge other provinces and territories to follow Ontario’s lead by exploring similar approaches to accelerate access to cancer therapies and reduce inequities across Canada. All Canadian cancer patients deserve timely, equitable access to life-extending therapies, regardless of where they live.

Participating Patient Organizations include:

- Colorectal Cancer Resource & Action Network (CCRAN)
- All.Can Canada
- AYA CAN
- Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada
- Canadian Cancer Survivor Network
- Canadian Immunocompromised Advocacy Network
- Cholangio-Hepatocellular Carcinoma Canada
- Immunocompromised People Are Not Expendable
- Lung Cancer Canada
- Lymphoma Canada
- My Gut Feeling — Stomach Cancer Foundation of Canada
- Pancreatic Cancer North America
- Prostate Cancer Foundation Canada
- Save Your Skin Foundation

These organizations remain committed to supporting initiatives that improve timely, equitable access to cancer treatments for patients across Canada.

## **About CCRAN**

The Colorectal Cancer Resource & Action Network (CCRAN) is a national, patient-focused advocacy group championing the health and well-being of Canadians touched by colorectal cancer and others at risk of developing the disease. We provide support, education, and advocacy to patients (and their caregivers) to improve patients' quality of life and longevity.

CCRAN has recently expanded its patient-focused mandate to serve patients with multiple tumour types through its Health Technology Assessment (HTA) patient evidence submissions, educational events, advocacy initiatives, and patient programming, ultimately to reduce the burden of cancer in Canada.

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