

## Eastern Health Releases Navigation Video for Cancer Patients

**September 25, 2017 – St. John’s, NL:** Eastern Health, in partnership with Labrador Grenfell-Health and the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC), has developed a video for new cancer patients. *Beginning Your Cancer Journey: An Introduction to Cancer Services in Newfoundland and Labrador*, was produced to assist new cancer patients understand and navigate services offered by the provincial Cancer Care Program.

Although developed for *all* new cancer care patients, the video was designed to be of particular support for the province’s Indigenous population, who often must travel considerable distances and overcome language and cultural barriers during their cancer journey.

The idea for the video originated at a forum held in Labrador in 2013, comprised of a number of stakeholders including: cancer survivors, caregivers, representatives from the Sheshatshiu and Mushuau Innu First Nations, Inuit and Southern Inuit groups, health-care providers in Labrador, along with cancer specialists and administrators from Eastern Health and Labrador-Grenfell Health. The group collaborated to identify ways to enhance cancer care services for the Innu First Nations, Inuit and Southern Inuit people, as part of an initiative known as ‘*A Journey in the Big Land, Enhancing Cancer Care for First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Labrador*,’ which was funded by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer.

“Eastern Health is pleased to make a video available to cancer patients that demonstrates various aspects of the cancer journey in a realistic way,” said David Diamond, President and CEO, Eastern Health. “The video highlights the importance of the relationship between patients and their health-care providers throughout the cancer journey. Eastern Health places great value on the delivery of patient-centred and culturally-sensitive care.”

This video traces the journey of a couple navigating a cancer journey from diagnosis to treatment, and also features interviews with patients (including Indigenous patients) and patient navigators. It recognizes the unique challenges faced by Indigenous cancer patients and establishes a valuable link between rural or remote communities in Labrador and care providers at both Labrador-Grenfell Health and Eastern Health.

“Labrador-Grenfell Health welcomes the release of a video that will benefit cancer patients and their families,” said Barbara Molgaard Blake, Chief Executive Officer, Labrador-Grenfell Health (interim). “While cultural and language barriers have often hindered Indigenous people from accessing cancer care services, we believe the work undertaken by the Journey in the Big Land project, and the navigation video in particular, will greatly assist individuals in overcoming the hurdles to obtain the information and guidance they need.”

“The Nunatsiavut Government is very pleased to have had the opportunity to be a partner on the development of this video *Beginning Your Cancer Journey: An Introduction to Cancer Services in Newfoundland and Labrador*,” said Johannes Lampe, President, Nunatsiavut. “This video will be instrumental in helping patients and families become familiar with the people and places they will encounter on their cancer journey, before they leave their community. This is a valuable resource which will help to alleviate some of the stress and fear that families experience when they are told of the diagnosis and have to leave their community for treatment.”

This navigation video is one of several initiatives implemented as part of 'A Journey to the Big Land.' Other initiatives include cultural safety training which has been delivered in person to more than 1,100 participants from around the province. In addition, there are patient and family-focused resources including a Cancer Journey booklet, and posters depicting the cancer pathway in plain language (in both English and Indigenous languages). Medical glossaries and body charts have also been developed and translated to improve communication between health-care providers and patients during telehealth appointments. Labrador imagery and artwork has been placed throughout the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Centre, the ambulatory treatment unit and the oncology inpatient unit at the Health Sciences Centre.

"We were honoured to be a part of the 'A Journey in the Big Land' initiative, which has already helped many families during such a difficult time in their lives," said Todd Russell, President of the NunatuKavut Community Council. "This video will hopefully help ease the stress that so many Southern Inuit face when they have to leave the comfort and support of home and community to fight this terrible disease. I want to thank Eastern Health, Innu Nation, Nunatsiavut Government and all of the various partners for the work they are doing to assist Indigenous patients in navigating a complex, and sometimes overwhelming health-care system."

"A compassionate, collaborative path to recognizing Innu spiritual and cultural needs along the cancer journey is vitally important to the well-being of our people," said Grand Chief of the Innu Nation, Gregory Rich. "We recognize that health care in northern, rural and remote communities is always challenging for everyone involved, and Innu Nation is pleased that Eastern Health has worked with Innu health care providers in both Sheshatshiu and Natuashish to identify and address some of the barriers our people encounter when leaving home for medical services."

The new navigation video (*Beginning Your Cancer Journey: An Introduction to Cancer Services in Newfoundland and Labrador*), can be accessed at [www.easternhealth.ca/CancerCare](http://www.easternhealth.ca/CancerCare).

### **About Eastern Health**

About Eastern Health Eastern Health is the largest, integrated health authority in Newfoundland and Labrador employing approximately 13,000 dedicated employees, over 700 medical staff, and is supported by more than 2,000 volunteers, including members of numerous auxiliaries and fundraising foundations. With an annual budget of approximately \$1.45 billion, the authority offers the full continuum of health and community services including public health, long-term care, community services, hospital care and unique provincial programs and services. Serving a population of over 300,000, Eastern Health's geographic boundaries extend from St. John's west to Port Blandford including all communities on the Avalon, Burin and Bonavista Peninsulas.

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### **Media Contacts:**

Tracey Boland  
Media Relations Manager  
Eastern Health  
T: (709) 777-1412  
[TraceyL.Boland@easternhealth.ca](mailto:TraceyL.Boland@easternhealth.ca)

Allan Bock  
Chief Communications Officer  
Labrador-Grenfell Health  
T: (709) 897-2351  
[Allan.Bock@lghealth.ca](mailto:Allan.Bock@lghealth.ca)