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SASKATCHEWAN CANCER AGENCY

SASKATCHEWAN CANCER AGENCY ESTABLISHES NEW GYNECOLOGICAL ONCOLOGY PROGRAM

Gynecologic cancer patients in Saskatchewan will soon have improved access to care.

In addition to the new gynecological oncologist program lead, five gynecological oncologists have received, signed and returned their letters of offer. Once contracts are finalized, six permanent gynecological oncologists will work in Saskatchewan. The Cancer Agency is working with the successful candidates to finalize start dates and employment contracts. Three positions will be based in Regina and three in Saskatoon.

In addition to recruitment of these highly specialized positions, the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency (Cancer Agency) will now administer the program. Previously, the Cancer Agency, the Saskatchewan Health Authority and the University of Saskatchewan's College of Medicine collectively led parts of the program.

"Our government and our healthcare partners are committed to provide safe quality care," Health Minister Jim Reiter said. "The Cancer Agency has an excellent track record of providing patient-centred care and by transitioning all program elements to a single agency can only further assist in the recruiting and retaining of these highly sought after specialists."

Dr. Laura Hopkins, gynecologic oncologist, accepted the physician lead position and will transfer to Saskatoon from Ottawa in September. Dr. Hopkins currently provides care as a locum for Saskatchewan patients. Dr. Hopkins' role will focus on creating provincial model of care guidelines, quality improvement initiatives and clinical trials.

"I am honoured to have the opportunity to build a strong gynecological oncology program and oncologist team for Saskatchewan," Dr. Hopkins said. "It is my passion to provide excellent, compassionate, timely care for my patients through all stages of treatment during such a sensitive time."

Anne Chase, ovarian cancer survivor and advocate, said: "As an ovarian cancer survivor and advocate supporting ovarian cancer patients and their families, I am happy to know that there will be more cancer doctors specializing in gynecology in our province and I hope that it will have a positive impact in diagnosing women earlier."

"I am pleased to continue to collaborate with our healthcare partners to stabilize and enhance the gynecologic oncology program," CEO of the Cancer Agency Dr. Jon Tonita said.

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