

*Manitoba Health, Healthy Living & Seniors (MHLS) supports reporting and learning from patient safety events. The focus of a patient safety review is to closely look at the health care system that surrounds and interacts with those giving and receiving care. The goal is to identify risks to patient safety and recommend the most effective ways to minimize risk and improve the delivery of healthcare.*

## **Patient Safety Learning Advisory**

### **Cancer Diagnosis Communication to Patient**

**Summary:**

A patient had a biopsy that showed malignancy.

At the time the patient was told the results, it was their understanding that they did not have cancer.

Four years later, the patient arrived at hospital for an unrelated issue.

A bone scan showed that the cancer had spread.

**Keywords:**

information transfer, communication, cancer diagnosis

**Device Name (if applicable):**

**Drug/Name/Fluid Name: (if applicable):**

**Type of Analysis:** single event

**Topic:** Clinical Administration/Documentation

**Findings of the Review:**

Upon review of the patient's chart, it was noted on multiple dates that the patient was under surveillance for cancer.

The review found that the patient was seen by five family physicians and at least two urologists. The transfer of information between each health care provider was not optimal.

The communication to the patient regarding various aspects of their care may not have been clear.

Various reports were missing from the patient's chart; some of which were crucial in deciding the treatment needed for this patient's cancer.

**System Learning:**

Consider the development of a provincial standard indicating the required information that needs to be documented in the patient's chart when a patient is diagnosed with cancer.

This information should include the type of cancer, plan for treatment and the patient understanding of the diagnosis and decision to move forward with any treatment