



## Patient Engagement at BioCanRx: Bringing Cancer Patients and Researchers Together

A Canadian network approach to better understanding cancer and the needs of patients

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**B**ioCanRx believes the path to better understanding cancer and finding therapies that save lives is by working with and learning from all members of the cancer community – including patients.

### BioCanRx and Patient Engagement

BioCanRx is a network of cancer researchers, clinicians, patients, caregivers, advocates, charities, nongovernment and nonprofit organizations, and industry partners working together to move the most highly promising immune-based cancer therapeutic technologies from the lab into early phase clinical trials. Early considerations of the socio-economic challenges these technologies will face when entering the health-care system are also explored.

This is made possible by strategic investments of public and matched nonprofit and private sector funds in cutting edge, interdisciplinary research, training, knowledge mobilization, and networking programs that build, support and maximize the talent of the network.

Engaging patients and people affected by cancer not only strengthens the network approach, it strengthens the relevance, impact, and uptake of research. Opportunities for patient engagement have been created at every network level. From clinical trial design and planning to knowledge

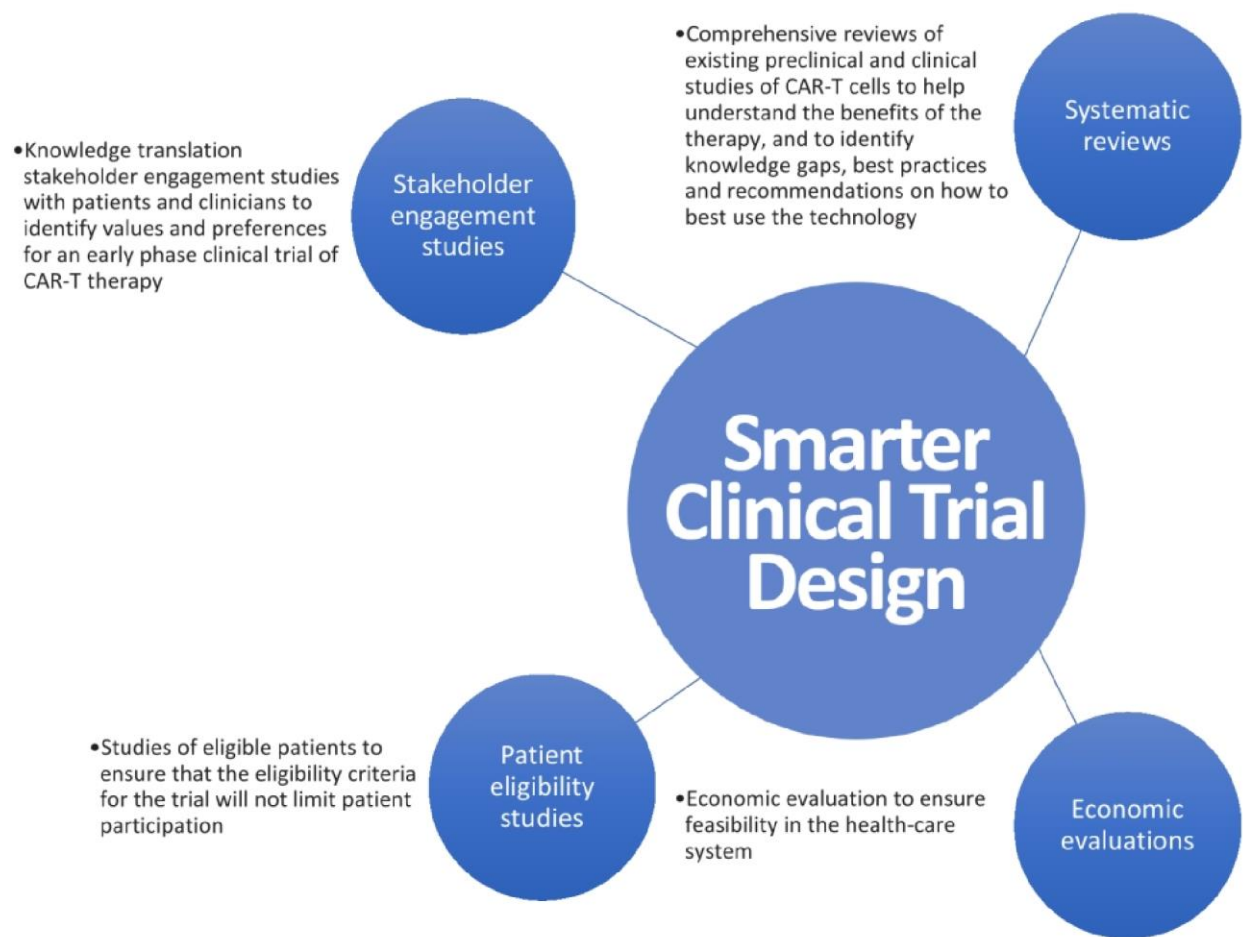
mobilization and partnerships, BioCanRx keeps the patient at the heart of its work.

### Patient Engagement: Smart Trial Design

Earlier this year, BioCanRx launched GO-CART (Getting better Outcomes with Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell therapy), a landmark knowledge translation research project led by Dr. Manoj Lalu at the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute. The project is designing a clinical trial to test chimeric antigen reception T-cell (CAR-T) therapy in Canada, offering a highly promising treatment process for blood cancers. The development of the clinical protocol is based on systematic reviews of all available pre-clinical and clinical evidence, integrated with the values and preferences of cancer patients, technology developers, regulators, and clinicians.

The GO-CART program is a response to concerns raised around the safety, efficacy, and economic viability of CAR-T therapy, and takes an early stage, “team-science” approach to formulating a trial protocol. Experts, including patients, are drawn from different disciplines to address each concern (see Figure 1).

This comprehensive, systematic, and multi-stakeholder approach to early trial design currently underway is the first of its kind in Canadian academia around immuno-oncology



**Figure 1 - The innovative GO-CART project approach to early clinical trial design**

product development. BioCanRx plans to support the expansion and application of the GO-CART approach for other immune-based cancer therapies in Canada, once the outcomes of the current project are revealed.



### Patient Engagement: Network Activities & Priority Setting

The needs and values of cancer patients and caregivers are front and center when it comes to the BioCanRx Cancer Stakeholder Alliance (CSA). This open consortium of approximately 50 Canadian charities, nonprofit and non-government organizations represents a variety of cancer indications and are focused on cancer research, advocacy, and patient and family support.

Members advise on overall network strategy and priorities, and work with BioCanRx on Joint Action Plan projects. The Joint Action Plan consists of collaborative and outcome-based activities that address three top priorities

identified by the CSA in partnership with BioCanRx:

- Clinical trial information for patients
- The Learning Institute
- Patient perspective in research.

-  BioCanRx
-  Summit for Cancer Immunotherapy
-  The Networks of Centres of Excellence of Canada



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