

Canadian **U**rological Association
*The Voice of Urology in **C**anada*
*The Voice of **U**rologic **O**ncology in **C**anada*



Association des **U**rologues du Canada
*La voix de l'urologie au **C**anada*
*La voix de l'**u**ro-**o**ncologie au **C**anada*

Canadian Urological Association (CUA)

2025 Pre-Budget Submission

Recommendation:

Provide Funding and Support Programs to Address a Nationwide Crisis:

Inadequate Access to Urological Consultation and Surgery

Recommendation: Provide Funding and Support to Address a Nationwide Crisis: Inadequate Access Urological Consultation and Surgery

Long wait-times for specialist consultation and surgical treatment have become pervasive in the Canadian healthcare system, including for patients requiring urological care. The federal government must allocate funding to ensure universal access to urological care across the country, in both rural and urban settings. Urologists are highly trained healthcare specialists who treat some of the most common health issues faced by Canadians, such as prostate cancer — the most common cancer among men. Urologists also surgically treat cancers of the bladder, kidney, penis, testis, adrenal and prostate glands, inflammation or benign enlargement of the prostate gland, male infertility and erectile dysfunction, kidney stones, urinary tract infections (UTIs), and urinary incontinence.

Many of the conditions listed above are more prevalent among an aging population and as a result urologists across Canada are overwhelmed by the workload. In a recent CUA report, members reported seeing over 60 in-person patient office or clinic visits per week, with some reporting over 100 in-person visits per week. This workload is unsustainable especially as the Canadian population continues to grow. Without an adequate workforce appropriately sized for the population, wait-times will only continue to increase, eroding the quality of patient care.

Wait-times across Canada have surged by 242% in the last three decades, now averaging 12.6 weeks from primary care referral to specialist treatment. Specifically for urological care, patients wait an average of 10.6 weeks from referral to consultation with a specialist, and 8.7 weeks from consultation to surgical treatment—exceeding reasonable clinical timelines.

In certain instances, prolonged waiting can result in poorer medical outcomes — transforming potentially reversible illnesses or injuries into chronic, irreversible conditions or even permanent disabilities. The economic impact on patients and the healthcare system is also significant if patients cannot work while waiting for treatment. Despite efforts to set

benchmarks, it is evident that Canadian patients still face excessively long waits for specialist consultation and treatment.

The CUA realizes provincial policies and priorities direct health care funding and expenditure, however we believe there are actions the federal government can take to help address urology patient access challenges. We are asking for the federal government to support the following:

1. Address the inequity of urological care across the country by establishing a national policy on incentivizing new urological graduates to practice in Indigenous and under-served communities while ensuring the necessary resources are available for urological surgeons to practice state-of-the-art care.
2. Lead the development of nationwide standards for wait-times for urological consultation and surgical intervention.
3. Providing more physician and registered nursing training and incorporating expanded role nurses, physician assistants and operating room technicians into the health care delivery model. Urgent attention to the health care worker crises requires national leadership.

An increasing Canadian population has led to an increased need for urological services resulting in longer wait-times, as the number of practicing urologists in Canada has not kept pace with the demand. The federal government should invest additional financial resources and support initiatives that will ease patient access to urological consultation and surgery across Canada; the federal government also should leverage the results of the most current Canada census data to update the minimum number of urologists practicing in communities across the country and to establish innovative health provider models to support urologists in practice. Current recommendations do not reflect Canada's aging population, nor the increasing complexity of urologic practice. CUA urges the federal government to embrace innovative solutions and support Canadians in accessing the timely, high-quality care they deserve.

About CUA

Founded in 1945, the Canadian Urological Association (CUA) is a national, member-based organization dedicated to enabling urologists across Canada with the tools and resources to provide the highest possible standards of care. CUA is a leader in professional development for urologists and fosters excellence through advocacy, education, research, and practice support tools.