

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Alberta Cancer Foundation, Cancer Care Alberta and industry leaders partner to invest in Precision Analytics program to address critical issues in cancer system**

**March 5, 2024 (Alberta)** – The Alberta Cancer Foundation and Cancer Care Alberta are proud to announce a transformative public private philanthropic partnership with industry leaders Merck and Astra Zeneca. Together, they are investing in the new Precision Analytics program that will help drive innovations in cancer care in Alberta. Driven by a shared commitment to address the most pressing challenges in health care, the partnership will leverage advanced data analytics to help address wait times and inform new models of care, with the goal of better outcomes for frontline medical staff and their patients.

"We know that cancer rates are increasing, putting constraints on the day-to-day workloads of health-care providers and the system as a whole," says Wendy Beauchesne, CEO, of the Alberta Cancer Foundation. "It is paramount we address growing pressures facing the cancer care system today, so we are prepared to help those who need it tomorrow. Not only does the Precision Analytics program exemplify the power of collaboration, but it will create innovative strategies to reduce wait times and enhance capacity within our health-care system."

"The Precision Analytics program will provide us with invaluable insights into patient characteristics, trends and resource allocation strategies," says Brenda Hubley, chief program officer of Cancer Care Alberta. "By leveraging real-time data and cutting-edge analytics, we can improve our operations and ensure that patients with cancer receive timely access to high-quality care, which we know is vital for better patient outcomes."

"AstraZeneca is proud to support the Precision Analytics program, which is aligned with our commitment to advancing cancer care through innovation," says Erik Schrader, vice president and head of oncology at AstraZeneca Canada. "This collaborative partnership and multidisciplinary approach to maximizing efficiencies in the health system is sure to advance the standard of care in Alberta and beyond. We hope learnings from this investigative model can be applied to other areas of health care across the country."

"Tackling the challenge collectively enables us to address inefficiencies in Alberta and leverage any valuable insights gathered to elevate the standard of care in other parts of the country," says Marwan Akar, president and managing director at Merck Canada. "Together, we are paving the way for transformative change in supporting better health outcomes for Canadians affected by cancer."

The Precision Analytics program is building on the Government of Alberta's investment into Connect Care and Cancer Care Alberta's Data Environment for Cancer Inquiries and Decisions (DECIDe), leveraging data from these initiatives to inform decision-making and streamline operations across the province.

The investment in Precision Analytics will facilitate the recruitment of specialists in epidemiology, biostatistics and machine learning to help identify patient characteristics, trends and factors that influence health-care delivery and access. Additionally, the program will develop interactive software to enable the modeling of various care delivery scenarios, providing an optimal learning environment for health department leaders.

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### **About the Alberta Cancer Foundation:**

*Creating more moments for Albertans facing cancer by inspiring our community to give to innovation in detection, treatment and care.* Albertans helping Albertans is at the core of everything the Alberta Cancer Foundation does. As the official fundraising partner for every Alberta Health Services cancer centre in Alberta, our very purpose comes from our desire to create more moments for all Albertans facing cancer, no matter where they live or the type of cancer they are facing. From the mountains to the canola fields in Lloydminster, we make life better for Albertans facing cancer by supporting world-class research and patient care, close to home.

### **About Alberta Health Services**

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than four million adults and children living in Alberta. Our mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans. Our current focus is on reducing emergency department wait-times, improving EMS response times, increasing access to surgeries, and improving patient flow. For more information, visit: [albertahealthservices.ca/cancer](http://albertahealthservices.ca/cancer)

### **About AstraZeneca**

AstraZeneca is a global, science-led biopharmaceutical business whose innovative medicines are used by millions of patients worldwide. The company's core areas of scientific focus are Oncology; Cardiovascular, Renal and Metabolic (CVRM); Rare Disease; Respiratory & Immunology; and Vaccine & Immune Therapies. In Canada, the company employs more than 1,700 people and recently announced a major expansion of its research footprint in Mississauga – including the expansion of its AstraZeneca R&D Hub and the creation of a new Alexion Development Hub for Rare Diseases. AstraZeneca was recently recognized as one of *Canada's Top 100 Employers*, one of *Canada's Most Admired Corporate Cultures*, and a *Greater Toronto Top Employer*.

AstraZeneca is committed to contributing to a more sustainable future for people, society and planet taking important steps to help tackle some of the most pressing sustainability challenges globally – from climate and biodiversity loss to health equity and health system resilience. AstraZeneca was one of the first seven companies globally to have its net zero targets verified by the Science-Based Targets initiative Corporate Net-Zero Standard. For more information, please visit the company's website at [www.astrazeneca.ca](http://www.astrazeneca.ca).

### **About Merck**

At Merck, known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, we are unified around our purpose: We use the power of leading-edge science to save and improve lives around the world. For more than 130 years, we have brought hope to humanity through the development of important medicines and vaccines. We aspire to be the premier research-intensive biopharmaceutical company in the world – and today, we are at the forefront of research to deliver innovative health solutions that advance the prevention and treatment of diseases in people and animals. We foster a diverse and inclusive global workforce and operate responsibly every day to enable a safe, sustainable and healthy future for all people and communities. For more information about our operations in Canada, visit [www.merck.ca](http://www.merck.ca) and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#) @MerckCanada.