

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Locally Developed Cancer Program to Become Standard of Care Throughout Atlantic Canada.

HALIFAX, NS - In Nova Scotia alone, 670 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer every year. In 2018, Dalhousie scientist and [Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation](#) (DMRF)-supported researcher [Dr. Gabriela Ilie](#) initiated and launched the wildly successful and highly-endorsed [Prostate Cancer - Patient Empowerment Program](#) (PC-PEP, [www.pcpep.org](http://www.pcpep.org)).

Beginning with a transformative gift to DMRF by Frank and Debbi Sobey in 2015, which created the Soillse Scientist in Prostate Cancer Quality of Life Research, PC-PEP has grown to become a patient education and empowerment program aimed at improving the lives of men living with prostate cancer in the short and long-term through exercise, nutrition, relationship-building, social supports and more, as part of a six-month, in-home, comprehensive health-promotion program. It is the first of its type anywhere in Canada and as of January 2022, the program will be rolled out to prostate cancer patients in Atlantic Canada.

"Together we are changing lives," says Dr. Ilie, "we are reaching more men than anticipated through what was meant to be a local research program that is now expanding. The PC-PEP program is dedicated to healing and transforming the lives of prostate cancer patients through medical science and community-building."

Results from previous phases of the research studies have showed that PC-PEP can empower the thousands of Atlantic Canadian men affected by prostate cancer to improve their quality of life related to treatment side effects, and the associated burden on their mental health.

Dr. Ilie, her team at the DMRF-funded Soillse Lab, Oncologist Dr. Rutledge and clinical and administrative colleagues at Nova Scotia Health Authority, Nova Scotia Cancer Center and Dalhousie University have launched the phase four (implementation trial) of PC-PEP on September 2021. The program is now available to all patients and survivors of prostate cancer in Nova Scotia who are fit to do the program. The Nova Scotia Cancer Center has provided written endorsement to support the roll this program throughout Nova Scotia, meaning all men with prostate cancer will have the 98 per cent patient-endorsed PC-PEP program integrated into their overall treatment and survivorship plan.

Eventually, the goal is to continue expanding the PC-PEP program throughout Atlantic Canada, and the rest of the country and to other forms of cancer such as breast, lung, colorectal, and more. Negotiations to expand the program outside Canada are also underway.

The program is [currently recruiting](#) participants for the phase four implementation trial and is open to all men diagnosed (or with a history of) with prostate cancer in the region.

## RESOURCES

### QUOTES

*"The PC-PEP program has complemented the care I received from the cancer centre and made a significant impact that will enable me to live a better life. For me, it was a life-changer and I sincerely hope others have the opportunity to participate in the program"* - PC-PEP Program Participant, Anonymous

*"This program broke the sense of isolation I felt after the surgery and offered me a safe environment to get the support and camaraderie I needed. I highly recommend this program to every man diagnosed with prostate cancer"* - PC-PEP Program Participant Dane Barringer

*"This is impactful research that doesn't only benefit the patient but creates a ripple effect to educating and improving care by emerging researchers and residents, and provides patient education, engagement, and empowerment as a standard of care, thereby improving quality of life for those living with prostate cancer."* - Dr. Gabriela Ilie, Associate Professor, DMRF Endowed Soillse Research Scientist in Prostate Cancer Quality of Life Research

### ABOUT THE DALHOUSIE MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation (DMRF) exists to strengthen health research to positively impact health and wellness regionally, nationally, and internationally. DMRF provides much needed support for researchers at Dalhousie's Faculties of Medicine, Health and Dentistry by fundraising to attract the best resources available to bolster their leading-edge work. Collaboration is crucial to our success and we nurture strong relationships with research institutes across geographic borders that share our quest for innovative outcomes.

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