

The BETTER Program

What is BETTER?

BETTER is an innovative, evidence-based program for patients ages **40-65** that focuses on prevention and screening of cancer (breast, cervical, colorectal), heart disease and diabetes. It also addresses lifestyle risk factors such as physical activity, smoking, alcohol and diet.

BETTER is a program that was developed by Primary Care Providers for Primary Care Providers. BETTER provides an evidence-informed toolkit that was developed through a process of guideline harmonization and includes a detailed care map. The Care Map is used as a decisional tool to determine when and how often patients need to be screened and when patients need to be referred back to their Primary Care Provider.

How does BETTER work?

Health professionals within your setting can enroll in a training session to become a **Prevention Practitioner™** and gain enhanced skills in chronic disease prevention with access to the BETTER Toolkit. Training is provided virtually over 2 or 3 days (11 hours of continuing education).

- Patients complete a comprehensive Health Survey to learn more about their personal health history, screening history, family history etc.
- Patients attend a one-on-one visit with a Prevention Practitioner™ to discuss their personalized cancer and chronic disease risk.
- Patients are supported to set S.M.A.R.T. goals and connect with resources to help lower their risk for cancer and chronic disease.

Why BETTER?

Benefits to patients

- Patients who have participated in the program have expressed that they value time spent on prevention. BETTER Provides dedicated time for patients to discuss their personal risk for cancer and chronic disease with a health care professional. They have an opportunity to learn how to take action to reduce their risk
- Personalized approach that encourages patients to take ownership of their own health and decide what changes they want to make.
- Gives patients the confidence in knowing that they are up to date with appropriate preventive screening.
- This program sends the message to patients that we are proactively working to address their prevention needs.

The BETTER Program

"It was nice to have someone look at the big picture regarding my health and develop a plan for me to go forward. Wish I had someone look from a preventative nature long before this.

Bravo!"

- Patient

The "[Prevention Practitioner was] friendly, non-judgmental. Assisted me with problem solving around my issues and helped me establish attainable and measurable goals within a set timeline."

- Patient

Benefits to practice

- Evidence based, innovative program to support and optimize your existing screening and prevention processes, while also supporting efficiency and collaborative practice.
- Training, access to the toolkit & tailored implementation support are provided to the practice to help meet your cancer and chronic disease prevention needs.
- BETTER has been successfully implemented across different primary care settings in Canada, including urban, rural and remote. The BETTER toolkit has also been adapted for Indigenous populations.
- BETTER provides a framework that helps foster collaboration and coordination. The program provides opportunities for professional development and expanding/working to full scope of practice.
- Recognized by the Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care as an effective approach for the delivery of preventive care.
- Included in the Patient Medical Home (PMH) Provincial toolkits developed by the College of Family Physicians of Canada as a primary care practice tool to help physicians move towards PMH principles by enhancing patient screening through evidence-based recommendations.
- BETTER program periodically reviews the evidence to ensure tools and resources are updated and consistent with provincial recommendations.

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"Prevention practitioners have a unique capacity to delve into the individual's experience and tease out what is most meaningful to them. This individualized approach is directly opposite to the general practice of algorithms, practice protocols and clinical guidelines. We are able to take the generalized approach and individualize it to personalize our approach to patient care....We are honoured to be present with them in their journey."

– Prevention Practitioner, NP

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Questions? Contact us!

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