

Why create a biobank?

Even though research progresses and risk factors such as age, race, family history and lifestyle habits have been identified, we still ignore what predisposes men to develop prostate cancer and what contributes to the aggressiveness and the progression of the disease.

PROCURE's prostate cancer biobank in Quebec was created to meet the urgent needs of the biomedical research community that was lacking adequate equipment to study this disease. Fully operational since 2007, it complies with high-level standard operating procedures.

In 2013, PROCURE partnered with the Cancer Research Society, providing an investment of \$4.5 million over five years and additional support for research initiatives on prostate cancer.

As part of the global directory of biobanks, it is internationally known in the field of prostate cancer. Moreover, it is now listed with the Canadian Tissue Repository Network certification program. Please visit the PROCURE Biobank's new website (biobanque.procure.ca).

Structure and Operations

The PROCURE Biobank is a collaborative project between PROCURE, four medical faculties in Quebec (CHUM, MUHC, CHUS, CHU de Québec) and the Fonds de recherche en santé du Québec. It also has been made possible through the important collaboration of all participants and the generosity of numerous donors and financial partners.

Up to now, more than 2,000 participants have generously donated biological samples, clinical and demographic information at the time of at their prostatectomy surgery. Their annual monitoring visit allows the biobank to recollect samples (blood and urine) and to update the patient clinical data; these data greatly increase the research and scientific value of the biobank.

These activities are performed by the biobank personnel (nurses, research assistants and associates) who work closely with clinicians, urologists and pathologists, along with personnel of clinics and hospitals affiliated. Without this synergy, such a multidisciplinary project would not have been possible.

New step for the biobank – Bio sample distribution

The 2013 kick-off of its sample provision process allowed our biobank to provide some 4,100 high-quality biological samples to two pilot projects, one in Quebec on new markers of recurrence and the other at the US National Human Genome Research Institute dedicated to the characterization and analysis of the prostate cancer genome.

Research with biospecimens of the PROCURE Biobank allows for identification of additional risk factors and will help to prevent the development of this cancer, to improve the screening and treatment methods, and to counter its progression.