

Financial coverage of smoking cessation medications in Canada, 2021

LEGEND

- Bupropion (prescription medication)
- ▲ Varenicline (prescription medication)
- Nicotine replacement therapy (e.g., patch, gum, lozenge, spray, inhaler)
- ★ Any resident with an active health card is eligible

Free medications at the point of care in cancer care settings

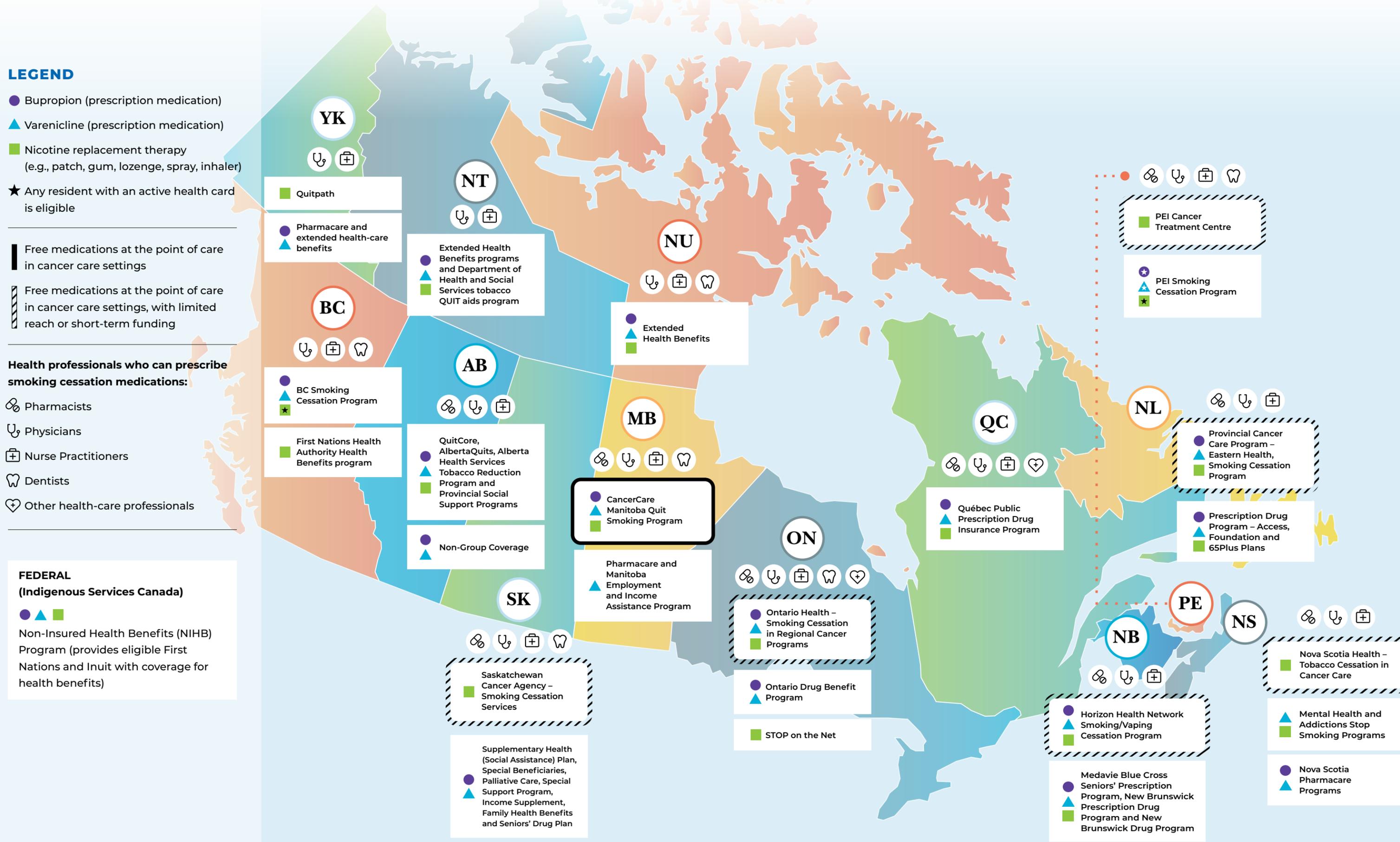
Free medications at the point of care in cancer care settings, with limited reach or short-term funding

Health professionals who can prescribe smoking cessation medications:

- Pharmacists
- Physicians
- Nurse Practitioners
- Dentists
- Other health-care professionals

FEDERAL (Indigenous Services Canada)

- ▲ ■ Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Program (provides eligible First Nations and Inuit with coverage for health benefits)



APPENDIX: PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE FINANCIAL COVERAGE OF SMOKING CESSATION MEDICATIONS, BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY, 2021

NRT = nicotine replacement therapy (e.g., patch, gum, lozenge, spray, inhaler)

BUP = bupropion (prescription medication)

VAR = varenicline (prescription medication)

 = Program that provides financial coverage of smoking cessation medications specifically for people with cancer

PROVINCE/ TERRITORY	HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHO CAN PRESCRIBE BUP AND VAR	PROGRAM NAME	ELIGIBILITY DETAILS	SMOKING CESSATION MEDICATIONS COVERED			COVERAGE DETAILS	ESTIMATED # OF PEOPLE ENROLLED IN PROGRAM EACH YEAR*
				NRT	BUP	VAR		
Federal	See provinces/ territories for professionals who can prescribe BUP and VAR	Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Program	First Nations and Inuit registered with program	Yes	Yes	Yes	Up to 252 nicotine patches, 12 wks/yr of NRT (gum, lozenge and inhaler, or spray), and 12 wks/yr of BUP and VAR	
Yukon	Physicians and nurse practitioners	Quitpath	Enrolled in Quitpath smoking cessation program (doctor's note required for those under 18)	Yes	No	No	12-20 wks/yr	
		Pharmacare and extended health- care benefits	Yukon resident registered with the Yukon Health Care Insurance Plan and 65+ or 60+ and married to a Yukon resident who is 65+	No	Yes	Yes	Unlimited BUP or VAR	5,546
Northwest Territories	Physicians and nurse practitioners	Extended Health Benefits programs such as the Seniors Program, Specified Disease Conditions Program and Métis Health Benefits Program	Registered with one of the programs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Up to 252 nicotine patches, 12 wks/yr of NRT (gum, lozenge and inhaler, or spray), and 12 wks/yr of BUP and VAR	
		Government of Northwest Territories Department of Health and Social Services tobacco QUIT aids program	18+ with NWT Health Care Plan card and not covered by NIHB or another benefit program	Yes	Yes	Yes	24 wks/yr of nicotine patch and 12 wks/yr of NRT (gum, lozenge or inhaler) and BUP or VAR	
Nunavut	Physicians, nurse practitioners and dentists	Extended Health Benefits	18+ and not covered by NIHB or another benefit program and meet specific criteria	Yes	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of NRT, BUP or VAR	371 (32,500 are covered by NIHB)

PROVINCE/ TERRITORY	HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHO CAN PRESCRIBE BUP AND VAR	PROGRAM NAME	ELIGIBILITY DETAILS	SMOKING CESSATION MEDICATIONS COVERED			COVERAGE DETAILS	ESTIMATED # OF PEOPLE ENROLLED IN PROGRAM EACH YEAR*
				NRT	BUP	VAR		
British Columbia	Physicians, nurse practitioners and dentists	BC Smoking Cessation Program	Resident of BC with active and valid Medical Services Plan coverage (provincial health insurance); for BUP or VAR, must be registered with Fair PharmaCare or PharmaCare Plan B (Residential Care), C (Income Assistance), G (Psychiatric Medications) or W (First Nations Health Benefits)	Yes	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of NRT, BUP or VAR (BUP and VAR may be subject to deductible under Fair PharmaCare Plan)	77,000 (NRT only)
		First Nations Health Authority Health Benefits program	First Nations enrolled with Medical Services Plan and Pacific Blue Cross	Yes	No	No	24 wks/yr of NRT (coverage is supplementary to the BC Smoking Cessation Program)	
Alberta	Pharmacists, physicians and nurse practitioners	QuitCore	Enrolled in a QuitCore smoking cessation program	Yes	Yes	Yes	Up to \$500 of NRT, BUP or VAR once/year	1,203
		AlbertaQuits	Working with an AlbertaQuits helpline counsellor to reduce and quit smoking	Yes	Yes	Yes	Up to \$500 of NRT, BUP or VAR once/year	
		Alberta Health Services Tobacco Reduction Program	Working with a health-care provider who holds a Certified Tobacco Educator credential and has registered with program to offer a minimum of 4 sessions to individuals interested in stopping tobacco use	Yes	Yes	Yes	Up to \$500 of NRT, BUP or VAR once/year	
		Provincial Social Support Programs (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped, Income Support, Adult Health Benefit, Seniors Health Benefits, Palliative Care Health Benefits, Learner Income Support Benefits)	Enrolled in one of the programs	Yes	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of BUP and VAR (special authorization for 24 wks/yr for VAR in conjunction with counselling); up to \$1000 of NRT once/ lifetime (Seniors Health Benefits and Palliative Care Health Benefits are not covered for NRT)	239,029 (Adult Health Benefit only)
	Non-Group Coverage	A recipient of the coverage	No	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of BUP and VAR (special authorization for 24 wk/yr for VAR in conjunction with counselling); co- pay up to \$25	79,253	

PROVINCE/ TERRITORY	HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHO CAN PRESCRIBE BUP AND VAR	PROGRAM NAME	ELIGIBILITY DETAILS	SMOKING CESSATION MEDICATIONS COVERED			COVERAGE DETAILS	ESTIMATED # OF PEOPLE ENROLLED IN PROGRAM EACH YEAR*
				NRT	BUP	VAR		
Saskatchewan	Pharmacists, physicians, nurse practitioners and dentists	Saskatchewan Cancer Agency - Smoking Cessation Services	Available to people with cancer (temporary external funding until March 2022)	Yes	No	No	Unlimited NRT (patch or lozenge)	
		Supplementary Health (Social Assistance) Plan	Covered by plan	No	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of BUP or VAR (Plan 1 receive for reduced cost, Plan 2 and 3 receive for free)	49,276
		Special Beneficiaries	Approved for coverage under the Paraplegic Program, Cystic Fibrosis Program, Chronic End-Stage Renal Disease Program, or a user of certain no-charge high-cost drugs; physician prescription required	No	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of BUP or VAR	11,703
		Palliative Care	Covered under program	No	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of BUP or VAR	4,159
		Special Support Program, Income Supplement, Family Health Benefits and Seniors' Drug Plan	Covered under one of the programs	No	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of BUP or VAR (at a reduced cost)	222,485
Manitoba	Pharmacists, physicians, nurse practitioners and dentists	CancerCare Manitoba Quit Smoking Program	Available to people with cancer, family members and staff	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unlimited NRT, BUP and VAR	
		Pharmacare	Covered by program	No	No	Yes	12 wks/yr (with deductible)	
		Manitoba Employment and Income Assistance Program	Recipient of program	No	No	Yes	12 wks/yr (deductible may be applicable)	
Ontario	Pharmacists, physicians, nurse practitioners, dentists and licensed health-care professionals practicing within their scope of practice	Ontario Health – Smoking Cessation in Regional Cancer Programs	People with cancer in some cancer centres (4 of 14 offer NRT, 1 of 14 offers BUP/VAR)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Varies from 2 wks to 6 wks to unlimited NRT, BUP and VAR	
		Ontario Drug Benefit Program	18+ and enrolled in program	No	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of BUP or VAR	4,000,000
		STOP on the Net	Ontario residents who are 18+, enrolled in the program and willing to make a quit attempt within two weeks of enrollment	Yes	No	No	Approximately 4 wks of NRT (patch and gum or lozenge)	

PROVINCE/ TERRITORY	HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHO CAN PRESCRIBE BUP AND VAR	PROGRAM NAME	ELIGIBILITY DETAILS	SMOKING CESSATION MEDICATIONS COVERED			COVERAGE DETAILS	ESTIMATED # OF PEOPLE ENROLLED IN PROGRAM EACH YEAR*
				NRT	BUP	VAR		
Quebec	Pharmacists, physicians, nurse practitioners and respiratory therapists	Québec Public Prescription Drug Insurance Program	Seniors	Yes	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of NRT, BUP or VAR (plus an additional 12 wks of VAR)	
			Individuals receiving social assistance	Yes	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of NRT, BUP or VAR (plus an additional 12 wks of VAR)	396,146
			Individuals without private health insurance	Yes	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of NRT, BUP or VAR (plus an additional 12 wks of VAR)	1,855,808 (excludes individuals older than 64)
New Brunswick	Pharmacists, physicians and nurse practitioners	Horizon Health Network Smoking/ Vaping Cessation Program	People with cancer with prescription from oncologist or primary care provider (temporary external funding until March 2022)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unlimited NRT and 12 wks of BUP or VAR (plus an additional 12 wks of BUP or VAR with prescription if needed)	
		Medavie Blue Cross Seniors' Prescription Program	Uninsured New Brunswickers who are 65+	Yes	Yes	Yes	84 nicotine patches and 960 pieces of gum or lozenges, or 12 wks/yr of BUP or VAR. Special authorization can cover an additional 84 nicotine patches (or 126 nicotine patches for patients accessing Ottawa Model for Smoking Cessation (OMSC) sites), or an additional 12 wks/yr of BUP or VAR; coverage is free for those with low income	17,117
		New Brunswick Prescription Drug Program (NBPDP)	18+ and qualify for program	Yes	Yes	Yes	84 nicotine patches and 960 pieces of gum or lozenges, or 12 wks/yr of BUP or VAR. Special authorization can cover an additional 84 nicotine patches (or 126 nicotine patches for patients accessing OMSC sites), or an additional 12 wks/yr of BUP or VAR	105,344
		New Brunswick Drug Program (NBDP)	18+ and qualify for program	Yes	Yes	Yes	84 nicotine patches and 960 pieces of gum or lozenges, or 12 wks/yr of BUP or VAR. Special authorization can cover an additional 84 nicotine patches (or 126 nicotine patches for patients accessing OMSC sites), or an additional 12 wks/yr of BUP or VAR	12,244

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				NRT	BUP	VAR		
Nova Scotia	Pharmacists, physicians and nurse practitioners	Nova Scotia Health – Tobacco Cessation in Cancer Care	People with cancer experiencing financial hardship can apply (temporary external funding until March 2022)	Yes	No	No	12 wks of NRT (patch or gum)	
		Mental Health and Addictions Stop Smoking Programs	Participant of smoking cessation program	Yes	No	Yes	NRT and VAR at a subsidized cost	600-1200
		Nova Scotia Pharmacare Programs	Registered under a Pharmacare program	No	Yes	Yes	12-24 wks/yr of BUP or VAR	225,823
Prince Edward Island	Pharmacists, physicians, nurse practitioners and dentists	PEI Cancer Treatment Centre	Available to people with cancer (temporary external funding until March 2022)	Yes	No	No	Unlimited NRT (patch and gum, lozenge, inhaler or spray) for duration of cancer treatment	
		PEI Smoking Cessation Program	Resident of PEI and enrolled in program	Yes	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of NRT, BUP or VAR	
Newfoundland and Labrador	Pharmacists, physicians and nurse practitioners	Provincial Cancer Care Program – Eastern Health, Smoking Cessation Program	Available to people with cancer (provincial funding for pilot program)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unlimited NRT, BUP and VAR	
		Prescription Drug Program's Access Plan	18+ and registered under plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of NRT, BUP or VAR (with co-pay of up to \$75/year)	10,710
		Prescription Drug Program's Foundation Plan	18+ and registered under plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of NRT, BUP or VAR (with co-pay of up to \$75/year)	38,405
		Prescription Drug Program's 65Plus Plan	Registered under plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	12 wks/yr of NRT, BUP or VAR (with co-pay of up to \$75/year)	45,704

*Refers to total enrollment in each program and represents latest data provided by each jurisdiction, where available



145 King Street West, Suite 900
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5H 1J8
Tel: 416.915.9222
Toll-free: 1.877.360.1665

Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. Financial coverage of smoking cessation medications in Canada, 2021.
Available at: partnershipagainstcancer.ca/cessationaidscoverage

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