



# BRIDGING THE GAP

## Advancing Colorectal Cancer Care in Russia

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Russia** has made notable progress in colorectal cancer (CRC) care, with organized screening programs in some regions, established oncology networks, and access to modern diagnostics and treatments in major centers. However, participation in screening remains inconsistent, advanced therapies are not equitably available across the country, and survivorship programs are underdeveloped.

With a **Level 3 – Advanced** maturity, Russia is well-positioned to strengthen nationwide coverage and reduce disparities between urban and rural populations through coordinated policy reforms and investment.

### INTRODUCTION

#### Building on Progress While Closing Regional Gaps

Colorectal cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer-related mortality in Russia. The country has invested in oncology infrastructure through its federal cancer control program, improving surgical and radiotherapy capacity. FIT-based screening and colonoscopy services exist in urban regions, but participation rates remain low, particularly outside metropolitan areas. Biomarker testing is increasingly available, though access varies.

Moving from **Level 3** toward optimal maturity will require standardizing care, improving early detection uptake, and addressing inequities in access to modern treatments and survivorship support.





# COLORECTAL CANCER IN RUSSIA

## Current Landscape and Strategic Gaps

Pillar	Current Status	Strength	Policy Action
Early Detection & Diagnosis	FIT-based screening introduced in some regions; colonoscopy follow-up capacity limited in rural areas. Participation rates remain low.	Established federal oncology centers with strong diagnostic capacity in major cities.	Expand national screening program, improve participation through awareness campaigns, and increase colonoscopy capacity nationwide.
Biomarker & Molecular Testing	KRAS, NRAS, and BRAF testing available in leading centers; not universally accessible.	Advanced molecular diagnostics integrated in urban oncology networks.	Scale biomarker testing access to regional hospitals and ensure public coverage under national health insurance.
Treatment Access	Surgery, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy widely available in tertiary hospitals; targeted therapies (e.g., EGFR inhibitors) limited by cost and availability outside major centers.	Strong surgical and oncology expertise in federal centers.	Expand access to targeted therapies by negotiating reimbursement and improving procurement pathways.
Clinical Guidelines & Quality Standards	National CRC guidelines exist, aligned with ESMO standards; adherence varies by region.	Federal cancer program provides a framework for standardization.	Strengthen monitoring of guideline implementation and train regional clinicians to ensure consistency.
Palliative & Survivorship Care	Palliative services are established in oncology hospitals, but coverage is uneven. Survivorship support remains minimal.	Integration of palliative care in federal oncology networks.	Expand survivorship programs addressing rehabilitation, nutrition, and psychosocial support; scale community-based palliative services.





## CONCLUSION & Call to Action

Russia's CRC system is advancing, but significant disparities remain between urban centers and regional hospitals. Scaling screening, ensuring nationwide access to biomarker testing, and expanding survivorship programs are essential for improving patient outcomes and equity.



### KEY POLICY PRIORITIES

**1 Expand and Strengthen Screening:** Scale up FIT-based programs nationwide and increase participation through public awareness campaigns.

**2 Ensure Universal Diagnostic Access:** Guarantee biomarker testing in all major hospitals under public coverage.

**3 Improve Access to Modern Therapies:** Expand reimbursement for targeted therapies and improve distribution beyond large urban centers.

**4 Standardize Care Delivery:** Enforce adherence to national CRC guidelines through audits, training, and continuous education.

**5 Develop Survivorship and Palliative Care:** Build comprehensive survivorship services and expand community-based palliative networks.

## CONCLUSION

With **Level 3 – Advanced maturity**, Russia has built a solid foundation for colorectal cancer care through its federal cancer control programs and strong oncology expertise. However, inequities in access, low screening participation, and insufficient survivorship support continue to limit progress. Addressing these gaps with nationwide strategies, expanded access to innovation, and stronger patient-centered care will be critical to reducing CRC mortality and improving long-term quality of life for patients across the country.