

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

to “End Cancer as We Know It” (Cancer Moonshot) Releases Report with Strong Support for Genetic Testing

Update: On December 7th, 2016 Congress passed a bill, dedicating \$1.8 billion in funding over 10 years for the Moonshot

Purpose:

The “Cancer Moonshot” was announced by President Barack Obama in his State of the Union address on January 12, 2016.

Led by Vice President Joe Biden, the initiative is tasked with ending cancer as we know it, and doubling the rate of progress towards a cure.

On September 7th, 2016 they released a statement with specific recommendations.



Cancer Prevention and Early Detection in Individuals at High Risk for Cancer

The Problem:

- ✘ **“It is estimated that more than half of all cancer deaths could be prevented”**
- ✘ **“Underuse of germline (hereditary) cancer testing in appropriate populations is leading to unnecessarily lost lives and diminished quality of life”**
- ✘ 1-2 million people are living with BRCA and Lynch Syndrome mutations
- ✘ Less than 1.2% of people with Lynch Syndrome are aware of their status. Similarly, only a small percentage of BRCA mutation carriers know their status and risk

The Plan:

- ✘ **Develop effective strategies to scale up HBOC and LS screening and deliver evidence-based care**
- ✘ **Better insurance coverage for testing**, particularly among poor and minority groups (with specific mention of Medicaid)
- ✘ **Education of primary care providers** to increase use of appropriate screening, counseling and evidence-based genetic tests
- ✘ **Use of Next-Generation Sequencing to look at genes beyond just BRCA1, BRCA2 and the Lynch Syndrome genes**
- ✘ **Better general education** so more people are aware of the genetics of cancer risk
- ✘ **Testing of germline DNA for cancer patients** along with testing their tumor

What this means for you:

The government is putting its weight behind cancer risk predisposition testing because of the proven benefits of such testing for your patients. As Medicare and other insurances shift from fee-for-service to quality- and value-based payments, a focus on prevention should also benefit the practice as well.

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