Abstract #10609

Building a Multidisciplinary Consortium in Iowa to Advance Genetic Counseling and Testing in Patients with Cancer

Authors: Sandra Megally1, Matthew Obinna Nwaneri2, Joseph Kim3, Limaya Atembina4, Lorna Lucas1, Lu Anne Bankert4

1Association of Community Cancer Centers, Rockville, MD; 2June E. Nylen Cancer Center, Sioux City, IA; 3Q Synthesis LLC, Newtown, PA; 4Oncology State Society Network, Rockville, MD

BACKGROUND
As cancer clinicians develop increasingly complex treatment plans, the results from somatic and/or germline tests are guiding personalized treatment decisions. Many patients with cancer do not get optimal genetic counseling/testing when indicated. To ensure that cancer clinicians are following the latest clinical recommendations around genetic counseling/testing, the Iowa Oncology Society (IOS), working in collaboration with the Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC), developed a multiphase initiative to inform quality improvement (QI) opportunities.

METHODS
In 2021, IOS launched a multidisciplinary consortium to advance genetic counseling and testing in oncology. Engaging a diverse group of stakeholders, IOS held a focus group to explore the current landscape, conducted three educational lunch and learn sessions, produced a podcast, and hosted a working group meeting. These meetings and activities were designed to explore ways to overcome common barriers in care delivery and identify effective practices to coordinate cancer genetic counseling and testing in clinical practice.

CONCLUSION
• Engage stakeholders and lead interdisciplinary efforts to improve genetic counseling and testing in patients with cancer.
• Use consistent language to reduce confusion about somatic vs. germline testing.
• Support the “Access to Genetic Counselor Services Act” to update Medicare law and improve access to genetic counselors for Medicare beneficiaries.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
The Iowa Oncology Society (IOS), a Chapter Member of the Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC), would like to thank the consortium members for their contributions to this important project.

FUNDING
This project is sponsored by the Iowa Oncology Society.

CONCLUSION
This multiphase initiative represents a framework for a state oncology society to engage other stakeholders and lead interdisciplinary efforts to improve care for patients with cancer. As the landscape of genetic counseling evolves, IOS supports legislative efforts aimed at having Medicare recognize certified genetic counselors (CGCs) as healthcare providers. IOS plans to build on this initial work to advance cancer genetic counseling and testing throughout the state by developing additional programming through 2022.

accc-cancer.org/iowa-genetic-counseling