Staging and Testing for Stage III/IV Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer: Perspectives from Pathologists and Pulmonologists in US cancer care programs

Accurate staging and testing using standard guidelines is essential for effectively managing advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) cases. Pathologists and pulmonologists are key to ensuring staging and testing accuracy. Improving their know-how on diagnostic modalities and alleviating barriers to care delivery can optimize care for stage III/IV NSCLC patients.

**What is the expertise level of pathologists and pulmonologists in US cancer care programs? What barriers to care delivery do they face?**

**National Quality Survey**
- Administered January to April 2019; web-based
- Multidisciplinary team members for cancer care delivery

**Total respondents** 639
- 44 US states
- 160 Unique cancer care programs

**Familiar with the latest staging system**
- Pathologists: 72%
- Pulmonologists: 85%

**Familiar with the latest molecular testing guidelines**
- Pathologists: 73%
- Pulmonologists: 69%

- **The presence of a pathologist at the patient’s bedside improved biopsy sampling adequacy**

A significantly higher proportion of pathologists, compared with other specialists, were unfamiliar with the science behind:
- Liquid biopsy testing (47.7% pathologists vs 35.4% other specialists)
- Tumor mutational burden (51.4% pathologists vs 39.1% other specialists)

**Barriers to care delivery**
- Poor patient referral for screening
- Poor appointment scheduling
- Patient refusal to undergo tests
- Missed appointments

Improving pathologist and pulmonologist know-how on diagnostic modalities and alleviating barriers to care delivery can optimize care for stage III/IV NSCLC patients.

accc-cancer.org/NSCLC-testing

Improving Care for Patients With Advanced Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer: Results From a National Quality Survey for Pathologists and Pulmonologists
Shiller et al. (2020)