



A PATIENT-CENTERED FORUM OF NATIONAL ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS ADDRESSING PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES IN CANCER

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January 6, 2009

The Honorable Michael W. Hager  
Acting Director  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Theodore Roosevelt Building  
1900 E Street, NW  
Room 5A09  
Washington, D.C. 20415

Dear Mr. Hager:

The undersigned organizations advocate on behalf of cancer patients, providers and researchers to help ensure access to quality cancer care for all. One of the most important issues that we have addressed over the course of many years is access to clinical trials for patients with cancer. Our advocacy resulted in the groundbreaking clinical trial policy announced by the Medicare program in 2000. Under this policy, Medicare agreed to cover all routine patient care costs for patients wishing to enroll in clinical trials, and we are pleased to report that a number of private insurers and states have adopted policies consistent with Medicare's.

Unfortunately, the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) is not among the insurers that have explicitly embraced a clinical trials policy guaranteeing coverage of routine patient care costs in clinical trials. We understand that FEHBP enrollees have been frequently denied such coverage and thus dissuaded from participating in potentially life-extending clinical trials. We also are aware that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has been contacted by The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) and the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), urging adoption of a clinical trials policy consistent with that of Medicare. Our organizations fully endorse the arguments forwarded by LLS and ASCO and request that you proceed immediately to implement such a policy for OPM.

Failure to take this step will mean that many federal employees are deterred from participating in clinical research, a result that is negative not only for them as individual patients but also for general progress against cancer. Obviously, the lack of a clinical trials policy has a disproportionate impact on clinical trials in areas with high

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concentration of federal jobs, such as Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and their surrounding suburbs. We strongly urge you to adopt without delay a clinical trials policy for FEHBP like that of Medicare.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

CANCER LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

American Cancer Society Cancer Action  
Network  
American Society of Clinical Oncology  
American Society for Therapeutic  
Radiology & Oncology  
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network  
Breast Cancer Network of Strength  
C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition  
Cancer Care  
The Children's Cause for Cancer  
Advocacy  
Coalition of Cancer Cooperative Groups  
International Myeloma Foundation  
Kidney Cancer Association  
Lance Armstrong Foundation  
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
The Lung Cancer Alliance  
Lymphoma Research Foundation

Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation  
National Coalition for Cancer  
Survivorship  
National Comprehensive Cancer  
Network  
National Lung Cancer Partnership  
National Patient Advocate Foundation  
North American Brain Tumor Coalition  
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance  
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network  
Prevent Cancer Foundation  
Sarcoma Foundation of America  
Susan G. Komen for the Cure Advocacy  
Alliance  
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer  
Education and Support Network  
The Wellness Community