

Dear Health Plan Administrator and Staff,

Rapid developments in the field of hereditary cancer genomics have made it challenging for health plan providers, members, and payors to navigate the cancer genetic counseling and testing realms. To promote best practices for cancer genetics services, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has compiled some of the existing tools and resources into a hereditary cancer toolkit, available at:

http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-73971_4911_4916_47257_68337-391948--_00.html.

This document and the above website address common issues that may arise as you determine genetic testing coverage for your members, draft written genetic testing policies, differentiate types of cancer genetic tests and results, and comply with state laws related to genetic testing. Below are some questions with recommendations and links to relevant tools:

1. **Genetic Testing: What are the differences between the various cancer genetic tests that are currently available?**

There are two broad categories of genetic tests: germline and somatic. Germline genetic testing looks for inherited genetic changes that increase the risk of certain cancers in an individual and their relatives. Somatic genetic testing identifies genetic changes in a tumor and may guide treatment choices for the patient with cancer.

Differences between germline and somatic genetic testing.	
Germline Genetic Testing	Somatic Genetic Testing
Testing a blood sample	Testing tumor tissue (sometimes comparing to blood)
Testing for germline mutations (present in all cells of the body) that cause an inherited cancer predisposition	Testing for somatic mutations for prognosis and/or treatment
Person tested may or may not have cancer	Person tested has cancer
Examples: BRCA1/2 (HBOC); MLH1, MSH2, MSH6, PMS2 (Lynch); APC (FAP)	Examples: EGFR (for treatment of lung cancer); KRAS (for treatment of colon cancer)

For more information on the differences between genetic testing for inherited cancer predisposition and genetic tests to evaluate prognosis and determine treatment, see page 5 of the Spring 2017 edition of the Michigan Association of Health Plans Insights newsletter at <http://mahp.org/download/file/fid/456>

2. **National Guidelines: How do I know if my plan member should undergo genetic testing for an inherited cancer syndrome?**

Several evidence-based and peer-reviewed guidelines have been published by national organizations. We have compiled these recommendations in the document linked here:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/Genetic_Counseling_and_Testing_Guidelines_for_Website_Final_607108_7.pdf

3. Health Plan Policies: Our plan does not currently have a policy in place for inherited cancer genetic testing in Michigan; how can we develop one?

For an overview of policy issues related to cancer genomics in Michigan, visit

http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-73971_4911_4916_47257_68337-367634--,00.html

For assistance with specific issues, email mdhhs-cancergenomics@michigan.gov.

4. Informed Consent: Michigan is one of only twelve states that requires written informed consent for genetic testing. How can I know more about this law?

Michigan law requires that written informed consent be obtained from a patient before any pre-symptomatic or predictive genetic tests are performed. Providers are responsible for providing information to their patients about the purpose, risks, benefits and limitations of genetic testing and the appropriate interpretation of test results. Go to http://www.michigan.gov/documents/InformedConsent_69182_7.pdf for a model consent form and a genetic testing information pamphlet.

5. Genetics Professionals: How do I locate a genetics professional? The Michigan Cancer Genetics Alliance (MCGA) maintains a list of clinics providing genetic counseling and test coordination in Michigan: <https://migrc.org/Library/MCGA/MCGADirectory.html>

6. Other Resources:

- Michigan Association of Health Plans (MAHP) Insights Newsletter: <http://mahp.org/resources/insight-newsletter>
- Michigan Cancer Consortium (MCC) Update Newsletter: <http://www.michigancancer.org/PublicationsProducts/MCCUpdate.html>
- Hereditary Breast and Ovarian Cancer (HBOC): http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-73971_4911_4916_47257_68337-356290--,00.html
- Lynch Syndrome: http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-73971_4911_4916_47257_68337-357147--,00.html
- 11 Questions to Ask When Making Genetic Testing Coverage Decisions (Hayes, Inc.): <http://evidence.hayesinc.com/11-questions-to-ask-when-making-genetic-testing-coverage-decisions>

If you need additional resources or have questions regarding the existing resources, please contact Nancie Petrucelli (petrucel@karmanos.org) or the MDHHS Cancer Genomics Program (mdhhs-cancergenomics@michigan.gov).