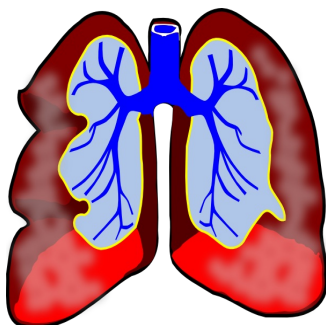

Lung Cancer Alliance National Framework Guides Responsible Screening For Those At Risk



In response to the announcement by the American Cancer Society, Lung Cancer Alliance (LCA) President & CEO Laurie Fenton Ambrose said on 11 January: "We are pleased that the American Cancer Society has joined Lung Cancer Alliance, other leading professional organisations and medical centres around the country in endorsing CT screening for those at high risk for lung cancer."

"No one disputes the results of the National Lung Screening Trial (NLST); screening works," she said, referring to the large randomised controlled trial launched by the National Cancer Institute in 2002 and terminated in 2010.

"The issues are how to deploy lung cancer screening responsibly and equitably, and how to determine who else will benefit beyond the NLST population of older, heavy smokers. We are addressing these issues through our National Framework for Excellence in Lung Screening and Continuum of Care," Fenton Ambrose explained.

The National Framework, launched by LCA early last year, outlines the rights of the at-risk public, guiding principles for screening sites and also calls for collection of data on outcomes so that lung cancer screening can be continuously improved through a rapid learning process.

"This is important because we have already seen improvements in imaging and protocols since the screening rounds in the NLST were completed," said James Mulshine, MD, LCA Board member and Associate Provost for Research at Rush University.

"This is critical. 160,000 people a year are dying of lung cancer and that is close to a third of all cancer deaths in the United States," he said.

Over the past two years, in addition to LCA, the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN), American Association of Thoracic Surgeons (AATS), and others have publicly supported screening those at risk.

Wellpoint, one of the largest health insurers in the country, included screening as a covered benefit for those at high risk in November 2011. Other commercial insurers are starting to act.

"It is time for policy makers to act. Screening needs to be available to those at high risk of lung cancer and it should be rated as an essential service under the Affordable Care Act, said Cheryl G. Heaton, Dr. PH, LCA Board member and President and CEO of Legacy, the national public health foundation devoted to keeping young people from smoking and helping all smokers quit.

Lung Cancer Alliance (LCA) is committed to ending injustice and saving lives through an alliance of advocacy, education, and support. LCA provides live, professional support, referral and information services for patients, their loved ones and those at risk for lung cancer; advocates for multiple millions in public health dollars for lung cancer research; and conducts national awareness campaigns.

Source: Lung Cancer Alliance

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