

Cancer Genetic Services for the Rural and Underserved Populations in Tarrant, Parker, Johnson, Wise, Hood and Dallas Counties

Sara Pirzadeh-Miller, MS, CGC

Certified Genetic Counselor

Moncrief Cancer Institute/UT Southwestern Medical Center

The Cancer Prevention Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) recently awarded Dr. David Euhus from UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas a \$1.6 million prevention grant to provide cancer genetic services for the underserved populations in Tarrant and its 5 surrounding counties. This grant will improve and open access for genetic screening and testing in your area. There are many projects involved with this grant, but I would like to highlight just a few new programs for your uninsured and underinsured patients.

- **Improved Hereditary Breast-Ovarian Cancer (BRCA1/BRCA2) syndrome case identification through systematic cancer family history screening at John Peter Smith Hospital and mobile mammogram units from THR Harris Methodist and Moncrief Cancer Resources /UT Southwestern.** It is standard of care to ask for family history information from patient obtaining mammography. Patients with a strong family history of breast and ovarian cancer may benefit from additional screening such as MRI and/or genetic testing. As part of this project we will be using a published screening tool developed by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to identify patients (Bellcross 2009). In some locations this tool has already been incorporated into the mammogram software.
- **Universal screening of all colon tumors under the age of 70 and uterine tumors under the age of 50 to improve the identification of the Lynch syndrome (hereditary colon and uterine cancer) through reflex mismatch repair gene immunohistochemistry.** All initial testing and follow up genetic testing is paid by the grant for uninsured and underinsured patients.
- **Genetic test funding for hereditary breast, ovarian, uterine and colon cancers for uninsured and underinsured patients based on medical and financial criteria.**
- **Genetic patient navigators will assist patients that are identified through the screening programs to obtain genetic counseling/testing.** They will also help patients that have tested positive for a gene mutation with obtaining and funding appropriate prevention strategies (i.e. breast mammogram/MRI for BRCA-positive, colonoscopy for Lynch-positive patients).
- **Telegenetic counseling in Parker, Johnson, Wise and Hood County in 2012.** This exciting new program will be launched through Moncrief Cancer Institute and community hospitals to provide genetic counseling services to patients seen in rural counties.

Indigent patients that are requesting cancer genetic services may be eligible under this new grant. For further information and details contact the cancer genetics department at 214-645-2563. As always, please contact your friendly genetic counselor with any questions at 817-838-4871!