

December 20, 2019

Representative Diana DeGette
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Fred Upton
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Recommendations for Cures 2.0

Dear Representatives DeGette and Upton:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we welcome the announcement of “Cures 2.0” legislation and request that you include provisions in the bill designed to remove patient barriers to cancer clinical trial participation.

Clinical trials are a key step in advancing potential new cancer treatments from the research setting to the cancer care clinic, and patient participation in trials is crucial to this success. Most patients express a willingness to participate in clinical research, yet only a small fraction ultimately end up enrolling in a cancer clinical trial due to barriers to make participating difficult or even impossible. Consequently, approximately 20% of cancer clinical trials fail due to insufficient patient enrollment, and those trials that are completed often take longer than planned to fully enroll. Cures 2.0 presents an opportunity to address these barriers and ensure expanded access to cancer clinical trials that will lead to progress for all patients.

In April 2018 a landscape report was released detailing barriers keeping patients from enrolling in cancer clinical trials [1]. Barriers exist throughout the ecosystem and include a lack of Medicaid coverage for routine care costs in clinical trials; a lack of access to local clinical trials in many non-academic settings; a lack of tools and incentives for providers to screen and refer patients; and trials whose designs unnecessarily keep patients from enrolling. A set of 23 specific recommendations for addressing these barriers (attached) was released at the same time as the landscape report and provides a roadmap for where progress can be made.

We encourage you to incorporate these recommendations into Cures 2.0 legislation. We stand ready to work with your offices on specific provisions and encourage you to call upon our collective expertise. For any questions please contact Caroline Powers (caroline.powers@cancer.org). Thank you again for your leadership, and we look forward to working together with you.

Sincerely,

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Society of Clinical Oncology
Deadliest Cancers Coalition
Massive Bio
Oncology Nursing Society
Susan G. Komen
TrialScope

[1]--“Overcoming Barriers to Patient Enrollment in Therapeutic Clinical Trials for Cancer,” accessed at www.fightcancer.org/clinicaltrialbarriers