Oral Defense Announcement
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Nursing Practice

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Standardizing Genomic Testing of Pancreatic Cancer in a Community Oncology Practice

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Place: Remote

Abstract

Problem. Ordering genomic testing for patients with pancreatic cancer can discover germline or somatic mutations that may allow for targeted therapy. There are some difficulties in obtaining genomic tests, such as which test to order, and optimal timing of ordering. In addition, interpreting results and maintaining easy access to the report in the electronic medical record can be difficult. Delays in ordering genomic testing can delay the discovery of an actionable mutation for treatment.

Methods. A descriptive comparison project was developed comparing rates and timing of ordering of genomic testing for patients with pancreatic cancer who established care with medical oncology between December 2019 and April 2020, and December 2020 and April 2021. Between the two data collection periods, medical oncologists began ordering genomic testing of pancreatic cancer patients upon initial consultation. Previously, there was no standard process of ordering genomic testing. The sample included adult patients at a Midwestern community medical oncology practice.

Results. The mean number of days from tissue diagnosis of pancreatic cancer to ordering of genomic testing decreased from 56.7 days in the first group to 13 days in the second group (N =11). No actionable mutations were found in either group.

Implications for Practice. Early genomic testing of pancreatic cancer can lead to earlier discovery of genetic mutations and opportunities for matched targeted therapy, which could improve outcomes for patients with pancreatic cancer.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
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