

Commission on Cancer (CoC) Advocacy Committee
Statement Supporting Genetic Testing and Counseling

The American College of Surgeons (ACS) established the multidisciplinary Commission on Cancer (CoC) in 1922 as part of its ongoing commitment to excellence in quality of surgical care. The CoC has sought to fulfill its goal of ensuring the delivery of comprehensive, high-quality cancer care by setting standards, conducting compliance surveys, collecting standardized data from its accredited programs to better measure quality, using data to monitor treatment patterns and outcomes to enhance clinical surveillance activities, and developing effective educational interventions to improve care delivery and outcomes.

Established in 2013, the CoC Advocacy Committee is responsible for identifying, evaluating, and recommending positions on legislative and regulatory issues that come before the state and federal government and have the potential to affect the needs or interests of CoC-accredited cancer programs and cancer patients.

Recognizing the importance and value that expanded access to genetic testing and counseling services have on quality cancer care for all patients, the CoC Advocacy Committee declares the following:

- Genetic testing and counseling have emerged as important tools in the accurate diagnosis and treatment of cancer. The CoC Advocacy Committee supports the use of genetic testing and counseling in an effort to provide the highest quality cancer care;
- Genetic testing services should be available to all cancer patients who meet disease specific guidelines and/or standards of care;
- Patients should have access to their genetic information, and should be empowered to take control of and make informed decisions about their cancer care and treatment options, with knowledge of the full range of clinical treatment options available; and
- Surgeons, physicians, genetic counselors, and/or other medical professionals with special training in or who are knowledgeable about genetic testing should provide patient education and counseling and make recommendations to their patients regarding genetic testing and arrange such testing where appropriate.

The CoC Advocacy Committee also vows to uphold and support CoC Accreditation Standard 4.4 that mandates that cancer risk assessment, counseling, and genetic testing services be provided to patients by physicians and genetic counselors who regularly perform risk assessment and/or are qualified to do testing or are a qualified genetic professional either on site or by referral.