

Another State Passes Law to Ensure Patients Can Access Biomarker Testing

Biomarker testing can open the door to precision medicine. Targeted treatment can lead to fewer side effects and improved survival.

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[On July 1] Governor Shapiro signed House Bill 1754 into law, securing a major win for patients across Pennsylvania. The new law will require all state-regulated health plans, including Medicaid, to cover comprehensive biomarker testing, which will enable more Pennsylvanians to access biomarker testing that can open the door to precision medicine. Targeted treatment can lead to fewer side effects, improved survival, better quality of life and potentially lower costs for patients facing cancer and other serious illnesses.

“With his signature, Governor Shapiro has delivered hope to countless Pennsylvanians who will benefit from biomarker testing,” said Donna Greco, Government Relations Director for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) in Pennsylvania. “This game-changing bill is good for Pennsylvania—the health of our state and its residents. Ensuring that more Pennsylvanians will have access to proven biomarker testing will mean more patients battling cancer and many other forms of chronic disease will have the information needed to identify the best treatments possible. We thank Representative Kyle Mullins and Minority Leader Bryan Cutler for their leadership on this critical legislation and Governor Shapiro for signing it into law.”

Biomarker testing has become a game-changing part of cancer care given its role in opening the door to personalized care, including targeted treatments that can lead to improved survivorship and quality of life.

Despite the proven benefits, insurance coverage has failed to keep pace with innovations and advancements in biomarker testing and treatment, resulting in some patients being forced to decide whether to pay out-of-pocket or go without the testing that may connect them with lifesaving treatment. Many people of color, individuals with lower incomes and rural communities have been left behind from the benefits of biomarker-informed care. House Bill 1754 will help address these gaps in access to biomarker testing.

Leading up to Governor Shapiro’s approval of House Bill 1754, patient advocates came out in force to support the bipartisan proposal and promote the importance of biomarker testing. Today, they celebrate the enactment of this critical legislation that is good for all patients, not just those with

cancer.

ACS CAN led a coalition of more than 50 groups to support the bill through the legislative process. Pennsylvania is the 20th state to enact comprehensive biomarker testing legislation.

For more information on precision medicine, cancer biomarkers, current barriers to biomarker testing and ACS CAN's policy recommendations, visit: www.fightcancer.org/biomarkers.

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