



National Minority Quality Forum awarded Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation grant to promote lung cancer screening in rural Kentucky

Builds on initiative promoting equity in cancer research, screening, treatment, and outcomes

New data from the National Minority Quality Forum indicate that 77% of all lung cancer cases reside in 20% of all zip codes. Lung cancer is the second-most-commonly-diagnosed cancer and the leading cause of cancer-related deaths, with marked demographic and regional variations. The toll of lung cancer in Kentucky is the worst in the nation, killing at a rate fifty percent higher than the national average in the rest of the country. The main drivers of this disease are obesity, smoking, and lack of screening. Notably, the risks for lung cancer in Kentucky are not equally distributed throughout the state, as a much higher incidence is seen in regions on the eastern side of the state near the Appalachian Mountains.

Unfortunately, this rural region continues to struggle with barriers to early screening and effective prevention and treatment due to long-standing shortages of primary care providers, coupled with lower levels of education and income/wealth than in most of the state, and the nation.

In response to this clear need, the National Minority Quality Forum (NMQF) is proud to announce its receipt of a Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation award to help primary care teams in rural Kentucky increase lung cancer screening for at-risk patients. Over the course of 18 months, NMQF will work with practice teams, patient advocates, the Kentucky's flagship lung cancer initiative — the KY LEADS Collaborative, national and local experts and the Kentucky Chapter of the American College of Physicians to help increase lung cancer screening among patients most at need.

"We are excited to expand the work of the KY Leads Collaborative to rural parts of the state and to ultimately help more patients," says John Damonti, President of the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation. "The partnership with National Minority Quality Forum is vital to help health care providers reach the most at-risk patients in the most remote locations, to ultimately help change the outcomes for lung cancer patients in Kentucky."

This initiative is one of several activities under the Diverse Cancer Communities Working Group, launched in response to the Biden Cancer Moonshot and promoting equity in cancer research, prevention, screening, treatment, and outcomes. The Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation funded initiative will work with primary care practices who serve patients in high risk regions of KY for non-small cell lung cancer, helping them use their whole practice team to more strongly and effectively communicate with their at-risk patients and effectively promote screening. The practices and their patients will utilize the educational materials developed by the Kentucky LEADS program.

"We are honored to have the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation's support to continue the important work of preventing lung cancer in Kentucky. The Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation and the KY-LEADS Collaborative have been leaders in developing patient-centered educational materials that we will work to help doctors and nurses implement in real world practice," notes Dr. Hall, COO/EVP of NMQF wholly-owned subsidiary Sustainable Healthy Communities or SHC. "We look forward to focusing on patients with the highest lung cancer risk and supporting some of the busiest practices in the states, struggling to serve large populations with many barriers to good outcomes." Dr. Hall continues "this program aims to support these dedicated practices in serving their patients."



The Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation promotes health equity and seeks to improve the health outcomes of populations disproportionately affected by serious diseases by strengthening healthcare worker capacity, integrating medical care and community-based supportive services, and mobilizing communities in the fight against disease. This initiative, Bridging Cancer Care, focuses on projects that seek to reduce the burden of lung cancer among minority and underserved populations through innovative models of prevention, detection and education, and by helping people living with lung cancer access and navigate cancer care and community-based supportive services.

The Diverse Communities Cancer Working Group is chaired by Jeanne M. Regnante and includes the following partners:

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Biden Cancer Initiative

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