

Report of Early Detection of Cancer Using Blood Testing

DRA Project Report 06-04

One half of men and one third of women will develop cancer during their lifetimes and it is the second leading cause of death in America. There are significant disparities in screening, diagnosis and effective treatment of cancer involving particular ethnic groups and the poor. Effective, easy to use screening tests detecting early cancer could make a big difference in beginning treatment early in the course of disease when therapy has a greater chance for a cure.

The Biomonitoring futures Project Advisory Committee at its April 2006 meeting identified early detection of cancer using blood tests as an upcoming promising area of focus to reduce disparities in cancer screening and diagnosis. Specific blood and other fluid and tissue tests are under development to detect early biomarkers. Once perfected, proven effective and commercialized, they will be used to identify high risk populations for monitoring and to screen for early cancers. A three horizon strategy is recommended to shape activities that the DRA project can undertake to increase these future technologies' potential to reduce health disparities.

Horizon 1 (1-3 years): Review currently available approaches; monitor and shape emerging potentials

- Monitor progress of the tests as it is possible for certain cancer screening tests to advance faster than expected.
- Conduct a study to document the extent of real disparities of cancer screening and diagnosis, which cancers are the biggest problems, and what the underlying root causes of these disparities are.
- Work on strategies to overcome cultural barriers using current screening approaches to prepare communities for future screening technologies.

Horizon 2 (4-6 years): Position strategy and resources leverage

- Work with developers of the new tests to obtain funding from the public sector in return for developing ways to meet needs of underserved.
- Influence the inclusion of minorities into clinical trials and encourage CHC participation in trials to determine appropriate use.
- Build bridges between the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and developer to get tests accepted and adequately reimbursed.

Horizon 3 (7-10 years): Uncover possibilities and create options

- Monitor progress of the development of blood, saliva, breath, urine, stool, skin etc. tests to determine the best time for DRA to act.

Review the full report at: http://www.altfutures.com/dra/Cancer_Blood_Testing.pdf. For more information on the DRA Project, visit our website at www.altfutures.com/draproject.

"The challenge is not only to anticipate the future, but to create it."

The DRA Project - Institute for Alternative Futures

Email: futurist@altfutures.com Website: <http://www.altfutures.com/draproject> Tel: 703.684.5880