

INVITATION TO MEDICAL ONCOLOGISTS

Understanding Risk-Benefit Trade-offs of Genetic Testing in Chemotherapy Treatment Decisions for Breast Cancer

Principal Investigator: Deborah Marshall, PhD

Co-Investigators: Maureen Trudeau, MA, MD, FRCPC; Natasha Leighl, MD, MSc; Yvonne Bombard, PhD; Ken Deal PhD

Research Coordinator: Linda Rozmovits, DPhil

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Dear Colleague,

We have recently received funding from the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research to conduct research into the risk-benefit trade-offs of genetic testing in chemotherapy treatment decisions for individuals suffering from breast cancer.

We are asking you to consider participating in a qualitative interview as part of this research. This research is based at McMaster University and will consider the perspectives of both medical oncologists and women who have been treated for breast cancer, some of whom will have undergone gene expression profiling (GEP), as well as others who have not.

What is this research about?

GEP is increasingly used in clinical practice and is specified in breast cancer guidelines as a complement or replacement to the clinical algorithms upon which treatment decisions are currently based. However it remains unclear whether women with breast cancer or their medical oncologists actually change treatment decisions based on GEP and how they weigh the benefits and risks of testing to inform their treatment decisions. Without evidence of GEP's value for informing treatment decisions, it is unclear whether it should be made available and reimbursed through the public health system.

What would my participation involve?

Participation in this research involves taking part in one in-depth qualitative interview. The interview would simply be a conversation between you and the researcher. For example, you would be asked for your views of GEP as a tool to support decision-making about treatment, about your approach to discussing treatment options with your patients, and about how you and your patients generally weigh up the pros and cons in making these decisions. There are no right or wrong answers and you do not need to

prepare for the interview in any way. You do not need to talk about anything you don't want to talk about. The interview will last for approximately 40-60 minutes and will be audio recorded.

Who will conduct the interview and where will it take place?

Linda Rozmovits will be conducting the interviews and qualitative analysis. She is an independent, senior qualitative researcher who is not the employee of any healthcare organization and has no vested interest in the project. All interviews will take place by telephone (landline only).

Who else is being interviewed?

We are planning interviews with 15 medical oncologists across Ontario. We will also be conducting a series of four focus groups with women who have been treated for breast cancer.

Do I have to participate?

Participation in this research is completely voluntary. You are not required to participate and if you do participate you may withdraw at any time without having to give a reason. Your rights and employment status will not be affected in any way whatever you decide.

How do you protect my confidentiality?

Your name and any other information identifying persons or institutions will be removed from your interview transcript and all of your research data will be identified only by a unique identification number. The researcher will not divulge anything you say to anyone or any organization. All research findings will be reported anonymously only as aggregated findings.

Will I be paid to participate in this research?

In acknowledgement of your time we are offering an honorarium of \$100 your participation in the research.

Who should I contact if I'd like to participate or have further questions about this research?

To arrange an interview or to discuss this research further, please contact Linda Rozmovits, Tel. 416-465-5189 or e-mail: linda_rozmovits@sympatico.ca.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Maureen Trudeau MA, MD, FRCPC
Natasha Leighl MSc, MD