

10 Things You Need to Know About the Cancer MoonShot 2020 Program

By The ASCO Post

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Vice President Joe Biden

In the fall of 2015, Vice President **Joe Biden** called for a “moonshot” to cure cancer. In his final State of the Union Address on January 12, 2016, President **Barack Obama** reemphasized that goal, stating, “Let’s make America the country that cures cancer once and for all.” To achieve that goal, the government announced “Cancer MoonShot 2020,” a historic national coalition of pharmaceutical companies, biotech, major payers, community oncologists, and academia.

Here are 10 things you need to know about the initiative:

1. Cancer MoonShot 2020 is a 4-year initiative to accelerate the development of immunotherapies to treat cancer by the start of the next decade.
2. The program is named “MoonShot” because it tries to do for cancer what the United States achieved in the 1960s when humans flew to the moon for the first time.
3. The coalition recognizes that every patient’s cancer is different. Treatments that work in one person may not work in others.
4. Based on this assumption, Cancer MoonShot 2020 strives to leverage all of our knowledge and technology to radically change how cancer is treated.
5. The alliance will accelerate access to next-generation immunotherapy cancer care by encouraging more collaboration among drug makers, biotech companies, insurers, and researchers.
6. At the center of the initiative is “QUILT,” which stands for QUAntitative, Integrative Lifelong Trial (see box).
7. QUILT will involve sequencing the genomes of 100,000 cancer patients, assigning 20,000 patients to next-generation immunotherapy by the year 2020.
8. The trial will include patients with 20 types of cancer, including breast, lung, prostate, and pancreatic.
9. The ultimate goal of the initiative is a vaccine-based immunotherapy tailored to the unique tumor signature of individual patients.
10. A group of physicians, researchers, and industry leaders met with Vice President Biden in December 2015 to discuss this new approach.

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