The Yale Lung Screening and Nodule Program as an ACCP/Center of Excellence

The Yale Lung Screening and Nodule Program (Yale Lung SCAN) was recently recognized by the American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP) as a Center of Excellence at the annual ACCP/CHEST 2012 meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. This distinctive acknowledgment was awarded to only 10 health care programs, recognized for their excellence, quality, and innovation. The Yale Lung SCAN program was invited to exhibit the program as a “best practice” example to an international audience of approximately 5000 registrants.

Members of Yale Lung SCAN (Amanda Reid APRN, Dr. Tanoue, Dr. Detterbeck) showcased their program at an interactive booth. The primary mission – to provide individuals at increased risk of developing lung cancer with individualized evidence-based screening evaluation and management - was exemplified through the Center of Excellence exhibit. There was a great deal of traffic and interest in the program. The overwhelming reaction was that the sophistication and evidence-based nature of the program were amazing.

The exhibit displayed the key components of Yale Lung SCAN including: 1) a comprehensive clinical evaluation and risk assessment, 2) estimating lung cancer risk using predictive models, 3) patient counseling and offering CT screening only to those for whom evidence shows a benefit, 4) programmatically integrated lung cancer risk modification, i.e. smoking cessation, 5) innovative educational materials and instruments, e.g. a decision support tool for both patients and physicians, 6) ensuring the quality and consistency of low dose screening chest CT performance, and 7) ensuring that patient evaluation and management is rendered by an organized multidisciplinary team approach including pulmonologists, thoracic surgeons, thoracic interventionists, and chest radiologists. The integration of a comprehensive pulmonary nodule program was also emphasized as being essential in developing a lung screening program, given the predictable high likelihood of abnormalities identified during the screening process. A set of short didactic lectures by the program faculty were also displayed by video.

Pulmonologists and thoracic surgeons attending CHEST 2012 who visited the Yale Lung SCAN Center of Excellence booth were invited to participate in a survey involving five clinical case vignettes that explored physician’s knowledge and preferences relating to lung cancer screening. Participants were asked whether they would screen the patient or not, and to estimate the patient’s risk of developing lung cancer. The results of the survey will be presented at CHEST 2013. People found that the survey was an educationally valuable experience that dramatically underscored how important a careful evaluation is before signing someone up for lung cancer screening.

The depth of the Yale Lung SCAN program was further exemplified by other components. Dr. Tanoue’s lung cancer screening biorepository provides an epidemiologic and tissue resource that can help answer many unresolved questions regarding risk factors and biomarkers. Dr. Michaud’s decision support tool helps educate patients about the lung cancer screening process, and identifies individuals’ motivations or concerns regarding screening so that misconceptions can be addressed and a rational, informed decision is made. An
iPad/tablet presentation of the decision support tool and a composite risk estimator incorporating all of the currently published lung cancer risk models were key in demonstrating the uniqueness of Yale Lung SCAN. These two innovative materials were developed by Paul Guillod, a second year medical student at Yale University School of Medicine. Paul Guillod attended CHEST 2012; his contributions to Yale Lung SCAN were recognized at the ACCP Center of Excellence as well as at the American Association for Bronchology and Intervventional Pulmonology (AABIP) Scientific Symposium held at CHEST 2012.

In sum, Yale Lung SCAN’s recognition as a Center of Excellence at the national chest meeting highlights the quality of this program. Yale Lung SCAN is a program of the Smilow Cancer Hospital/Yale Cancer Center.

To learn more about the Yale Lung Screening and Nodule Program, visit their website at http://yalecancercenter.org/patient/programs/thoracic/specialties/screening/index.aspx or call 203-200-LUNG (5864).

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