Managed Care Matters

How Can You Form a Strategy for a Hand of Cards You Have Never Seen?

Esoteric and genetic testing techniques may be the solution

The “genomics revolution” is quickly revealing dramatic opportunities to improve healthcare. The benefits: personalized, pre-emptive strategies with the ability to monitor therapeutic effectiveness in advance of negative health impact. The challenge: health plans need information and insights about the costs and benefits of genomic tests and the insights they reveal.

Infectious Disease–A cure for trial and error

Trial and error in treating HIV and Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) is costly in human and economic terms. Quest Diagnostics’ national network of laboratories increases access to viral load and genotyping for these patients.

VirtualPhenotype™ predicts resistance to antiviral drugs and can help physicians to select drugs that should improve a patient’s response to treatment, making it much more cost effective for managing disease progression.

HEPTIMAX™ is a broad range test used in diagnosing active Hepatitis C infection and monitoring response to anti-viral therapy. It also helps physicians confirm viral clearance with greater confidence and allows for earlier identification of relapsing patients.

HCV Genotyping by Line-Probe Assay (LiPA) technology can help determine the appropriate treatment duration and predict a patient’s likelihood of therapeutic response, enabling physicians to better manage expectations and possibly avoid 24 weeks of unnecessary treatment, inconvenience and costs.

Cancer Among Women–Early detection matters

Early detection is the most effective weapon in women’s battle against cancer.

SurePath™ is a liquid-based Pap test that transfers 100% of the collected cells (as opposed to the standard 20%) to the laboratory for processing and evaluation, providing physicians and plan members with greater accuracy, efficiency and peace of mind, without increased cost.

Cancer Antigen 125 (CA125), a blood test for women already diagnosed with ovarian cancer, helps monitor their response to therapy and detect recurrence.

Vysis UroVysion™ molecular cytology is an FDA-approved, genomic DNA-probe test that detects the presence of bladder cancer up to six months sooner than other diagnostic methods. With 95 percent specificity, Vysis UroVysion™ offers fewer false results and allows for earlier, more aggressive treatment.

Prenatal Genetic Screening Can Help to Make Important Decisions

March of Dimes estimates that approximately 30,000 children and adults in the U.S. have cystic fibrosis (CF), one of the most common inherited diseases in the country. In fact, one infant out of every 3,300 live births is diagnosed with CF.

Quest Diagnostics offers CF Carrier Screening, a test that uses blood samples to determine whether prospective parents are carriers of genes that cause CF. The presence of a single CF mutation in an asymptomatic individual identifies that person as a carrier. Approximately 18% of affected individuals have only one detectable mutation and 1% have no detectable mutations. The absence of a CF mutation significantly reduces, but does not eliminate, the risk of being a carrier. The remaining carrier risk is influenced by the individual’s personal and family history and ethnicity.

The National Institute of Health Consensus Guidelines state that, in the past, genetic testing for CF has only been offered to couples where one partner has CF or to individuals who have a family history of CF. Now, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends offering DNA screening to both expectant couples and those planning to become pregnant.

Quest Diagnostics is committed to providing patients with an ample opportunity to educate themselves, in consultation with their physicians, prior to the conception or birth of a child. Although not curable, treatments are available that increase the length and quality of life for individuals with CF. Quest Diagnostics has a toll free hotline for physicians to consult with experts on questions regarding CF Carrier Screening and other genetic testing, 1-866-GENE-INFO (1-866-436-3463).

1 March of Dimes, Cystic Fibrosis, Public Health Information Sheet, 2002
4 ACOG News Release: Ob-Gyns Offering Large-Scale Cystic Fibrosis Screening, December 12, 2001
In The Spotlight
Surya N. Mohapatra, Ph.D.

Dr. Surya N. Mohapatra was recently named to succeed Kenneth W. Freeman’s as Chief Executive Officer of Quest Diagnostics Incorporated, no later than May 2004. In making the announcement, Mr. Freeman cited Dr. Mohapatra’s instrumental role in developing and executing the company’s business strategy, driving Six Sigma quality, raising Quest Diagnostics’ commitment to pricing discipline and introducing new tests and technologies. “After eight and a half years in the job, I felt strongly that the time was right for new leadership and that Surya was uniquely qualified to lead the company,” Mr. Freeman said. “I’m gratified that the Board selected Surya, my closest partner in developing and executing our business strategy over the past five years.”

“By focusing on our values, starting with integrity and quality, and effective execution, we’ll continue to support health plans as they work effectively with employers, network physicians and healthcare providers to deliver high quality benefits to their members,” said Dr. Mohapatra.

Dr. Mohapatra joined Quest Diagnostics in February 1999, as Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, becoming President four months later. Since then, he has been responsible for the day-to-day management of Quest Diagnostics, in addition to cultivating the growth and strategic direction of the company.

“This new role brings my healthcare experience and background in medical science and technology full circle,” he said. “I will utilize this knowledge along with my collaborative experiences with Ken Freeman to continue to enhance our relationships within managed care and the broader healthcare industry, and be able to provide patients with affordable access to high quality, effective diagnostic services.”

If you know your cards, you can effectively play your hand
Prenatal, genetic testing options offer opportunities for parents to educate themselves prior to the birth—and even conception—of a child.

- CF Carrier Screening is a blood test that determines whether prospective parents are carriers of genes that cause CF.
- Hemoglobin Electrophoresis is a simple blood test that can determine the carrier status of sickle cell anemia in both parents, which, in turn, determines whether there is a need for further testing to assess the risk in their unborn child.
- Chorionic Villus Sampling (CVS) is an alternative method to an amniocentesis to identify signs of Down syndrome. Results are available within days as opposed to weeks, providing parents with quicker answers.

Genomic Testing—Insights that lead to better decision-making
Quest Diagnostics is committed to helping the healthcare community transition from general techniques to those that are effective in targeting a patient’s unique needs and risks, and lead to more effective treatment.

1 Y2k Health & Detox Center Newsletter: http://www.y2khealthanddetox.com/Genomictesting.html
2 American Cancer Society: http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/ped_2.asp?sitearea=PED&level=1