The Right Test Case Study:
Patient Advocacy-Led Biomarker Testing Model

Know Your Tumor – Expanding Access to Biomarker Testing in Pancreatic Cancer
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN)

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This case study focuses on ensuring patients receive the right test for their type of cancer.

Challenge
- In 2014, biomarker testing was not yet standard of care in pancreatic cancer.
- Patients faced barriers related to access, insurance, geography, and cost.
- Confusion between biomarker testing and genetic testing left patients without adequate support in physician discussions.
- Limited data available on pancreatic cancer tumor biomarkers

Solution
- Launched Know Your Tumor in 2014, offering NGS testing before it was standard, ensuring access even when coverage lacked.
- Free-of-charge testing initially targeted all patients, later prioritizing those facing access barriers.
- PanCAN handles patient engagement and education, while testing partners manage testing and provider communication.
- A dedicated patient services helpline with case managers guide patients and caregivers throughout the process, providing education and guidance for navigating precision medicine conversations with their treating physician

Outcomes
- Analysis of the first 640 patients revealed >25% had highly actionable mutations.
- Patients who received matched therapy lived ~12 months longer than those who did not.
- The program reaches patients across the U.S., regardless of geography, and weekly collaboration with partner organizations/testing laboratories resolves process barriers promptly.

Key Learnings
- Education and patient support are critical for meaningful program impact.
- Long-term programs must adapt to evolving science and coverage landscapes.
- Targeting patients with barriers increases equity and impact.
- Strong, ongoing vendor partnerships are essential.
- Careful testing partner review ensures alignment with clinical needs.
- Collaboration between PanCAN case managers and the partnering lab is central to program success.

Replication Tip
- Build robust patient navigation and education capacity alongside your testing partner to ensure patients can act on results effectively.

> “Strong partnerships are at the core of making biomarker testing accessible and meaningful for patients.”

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