

Our Impact

JULY—DECEMBER 2020

Over the last six months the world continued to change and so did FORCE. With the help of our Board of Directors, volunteers, healthcare providers and generous donors we adapted and expanded. We created new programs and support practices to accommodate the hereditary cancer community during changing times, all while launching a bigger, better FORCE that serves so many more. Our new logo is reflective of our expanded community and now includes anyone who faces hereditary breast, colorectal, endometrial, ovarian, pancreatic or prostate cancer as a result of a BRCA, ATM, PALB2, CHEK2, PTEN or other inherited gene mutation or Lynch syndrome. No matter what your hereditary cancer mutation or diagnosis, we are here for you.

Read on to learn about some of our milestones these last six months and know that with all our strength and an abundance of passion we are working harder than ever to serve and support the hereditary cancer community.

RESEARCH

- FORCE integrated colorectal cancer, endometrial cancer and Lynch syndrome into our Research Search and Enroll tool. This makes it easier for more people to find studies and potentially receive cutting-edge care. Ours is the only matching tool that focuses specifically on hereditary cancer.

PUBLIC POLICY

- We supported the introduction and passage of a new law that makes Florida the first U.S. state to protect genetic information from life, long-term care and disability insurers, who are exempt from the protections afforded by GINA (Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act). Insurers can no longer deny Floridians coverage based on a genetic predisposition to cancer.
- We worked with the Federal Blue Cross health plan to revise its policies that implied coverage exclusions for risk-reducing mastectomy and salpingo-oophorectomy, ensuring that high-risk individuals can access these recommended surgeries.
- FORCE applauded the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force for its recommendation to lower the age from 50 to 45 for “average risk” individuals to start colorectal cancer screening. We advocated for additional guidance to identify those who may be at high risk due to an inherited genetic mutation so more healthcare providers can identify patients who should be referred for genetic counseling and testing, when appropriate.



Our participation at the National Society of Genetic Counselor's conference led to many conversations and comments:

"Thank you so much for all of your work. The impact on our patients is immeasurable!"

"The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Cancer Genomics program loves your growing community and resources. It's been amazing to see your programs grow."

"At the University of Minnesota, we continue to use your resources for training the next generation of students. As a member of the NSGC Board of Directors, I want to thank you for supporting the community and our patients."

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

- FORCE renamed National Hereditary Breast & Ovarian Cancer Week to the broader, more inclusive National Hereditary Cancer Week. This change reflects the growth in genetic research and FORCE's move to support populations of many inherited mutations and cancers. September 27 – October 3, 2020 was the inaugural National Hereditary Cancer Week, allowing us to honor ALL people affected by hereditary cancer.
- We created our first two videos to accompany XRAY reviews. These short, plain-language videos convey key findings and are closed-captioned for increased accessibility. These, and future videos will broaden understanding of healthcare information and enhance the engagement of visual learners in the FORCE community.
- A new, searchable portal for colorectal cancer is now available as part of our XRAY Behind the Cancer Headlines program. XRAY now covers cancer news about prostate, pancreatic and colorectal cancer in addition to breast cancer in young women, metastatic breast cancer and ovarian cancer. These portals allow community members to rapidly find information that is most relevant for their personal situations.

SUPPORT

- FORCE pivoted all local support to a safe online model when the pandemic made it impossible to hold in-person support meetings. Virtual meetings allow us to maintain this important aspect of support and to provide increased access to individuals who live in rural and remote communities, ensuring that no one faces hereditary cancer alone.
- To better serve our community, we launched a 15-course, interactive, online curriculum to train our 350 volunteers on our new, expanded mission so they can be effective and inspiring to our growing constituency.



Facing Hereditary Cancer EMPOWERED

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