



S.B. 199, S.D. 2 RELATING TO THE COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING PILOT PROGRAM
House Committee on Finance
April 1, 2013, 2:00 p.m.
Room 308

The Queen's Medical Center (QMC) supports S.B. 199 S.D. 2 with reservations for the purpose of establishing a two-year Hawai'i colorectal cancer screening pilot program using the Hawai'i comprehensive breast and cervical cancer control program (BCCCP) as a model. Our reservation is on the intent to delete the provision of colorectal cancer screenings.

This program would not fund screening or treatment for individuals who have insurance (as a means of circumventing their cost share obligation). This program would also not serve individuals who have coverage for colorectal-cancer screening or treatment through mandated individual or group hospital and medical service contracts.

However, similar to the initial start up of the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program, this program will enhance Department of Health colorectal cancer education efforts and provide screening only, not treatment, for uninsured individuals who do not have and/or are not eligible for medical/health insurance), such as Compact of Free Association migrants and Green Card holders who lack the required 5-year residency criteria for Medicaid.

According to the Affordable Care Act, colorectal cancer screening (like breast and cervical cancer screening) will be afforded to everyone by 2014. However, it is anticipated there will continue to be gap groups of uninsured who still lack access to colorectal cancer screenings, just as there continues to be gap groups of uninsured who lack access to breast and cervical cancer screenings despite the existing Breast and Cervical Cancer Mortality Prevention Act of 1990 and the Hawaii Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) established in 1997.

Point in fact, in October 2011 The Queen's Medical Center launched the Direct Referral Colonoscopy Program to increase colon cancer awareness and decrease the wait-time for a colonoscopy screening among average-risk patients age 50 and over. Since its inception, over 1,500 eligible patients have been screened with an alarming polyp (cancerous growth) detection rate of 72% and adenoma (non-cancer, but can become cancer) detection rate of 41%.

Screening tests can prevent the occurrence of colorectal cancers by allowing the detection and removal of pre-cancerous lesions (Hawaii Cancer Facts and Figures 2010). Survival from colorectal cancer is more than 90 percent when the cancer is diagnosed early, before it has extended beyond the intestinal wall. Trend data from the National Cancer Institute also supports the need for increased screening to reduce colon cancer mortality.

Therefore, a two-year colorectal cancer screening pilot program as originally proposed will enable the Department of Health and its chronic disease partners to demonstrate the feasibility and sustainability of a Hawaii Colorectal Cancer Control Program that is tailored after its successful BCCCP model and utilizes the existing infrastructure and funding mechanism.

The Queen's Medical Center supports this measure with reservations for the above-identified reasons and asks for your full support in establishing a two-year Hawai'i colorectal cancer screening pilot program to fight colorectal cancer, a cancer that IS preventable, treatable, and beatable.