

Press Release



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GOVERNOR DAVIS ANNOUNCES STATEWIDE PROSTATE CANCER TREATMENT PROGRAM

Services To Be Offered in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Davis, Irvine and San Diego

SACRAMENTO

Governor Gray Davis today announced the nation's first statewide prostate cancer treatment program to provide medical care to low-income and uninsured men suffering from the disease.

"This innovative program will provide life-saving treatment for needy Californians," Governor Davis said. "Education, counseling and state-of-the art treatment are integral parts of the program."

The Improving Access, Counseling and Treatment for Californians with Prostate Cancer (IMPACT) program is funded for three years with \$50 million (\$10 million in the first year, \$20 million in the subsequent two years) in state general funds and national tobacco settlement funds.

The program is managed by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). It recently began providing services at the UCLA Medical Center, the University of California, San Francisco, and the University of California, Davis in Sacramento. Early next year, sites will be opened at the University of California, Irvine and the University of California, San Diego, followed by additional sites around the state. The California Department of Health Services administers the funding and oversees the entire program.

Each regional site offers patient care and collaborates with local health departments and other community health care providers to establish a network of health facilities statewide that helps patients be evaluated and treated in local communities.

IMPACT serves men regardless of age who have no or limited health insurance. They must have incomes less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

In addition to receiving treatment for prostate cancer, enrollees receive assistance in coordinating his medical care needs from a registered nurse. Education for patients about treatment options and access to clinical trials also is provided.

A special health education team will design outreach strategies that address the cultural, ethnic and low-literacy issues often found in underserved communities in California. The team will also create key materials and address the psychosocial issues of men served by the program.

Typically, prostate cancer tends to be diagnosed later in life. About 75 percent of prostate cancers are diagnosed among men ages 65 and older. African-American men are at especially high-risk for prostate cancer; they are 70 percent more likely to develop the disease than non-Hispanic white men.

The cause of prostate cancer is not yet known. However, certain risk factors have been linked to the disease, including age, race and ethnicity, a high-fat diet and a family history of prostate cancer.

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