

Dr. Dawn Hershman

Title: Reducing Overuse and Increasing Underuse to Improve the Quality and Safety of Breast Cancer Care

Lay Abstract

Multiple new treatments, diagnostic tests and procedures for cancer patients have been introduced in the past decade. However, studies suggest that some cancer patients do not receive the most effective of these treatments and/or procedures. At the same time, other patients are offered costly treatments that lack evidence of survival or quality-of-life benefits. Direct medical care costs attributable to cancer have been rising, therefore, understanding the use of expensive cancer treatments/tests is of great interest. In order to develop policies that can respond to the rapid rise in the cost of oncology care while ensuring that patients continue to have access to new therapies, it is critical to understand the patterns, predictors and toxicities associated with the use of these therapies in the “real world”. I have spent the past fifteen years developing a comprehensive multidisciplinary program to study ways of improving cancer care delivery (CCD), reducing disparities and designing studies to improve the quality of life and quality of care in BC survivors. I have a strong track record in mentoring fellows, graduate students and junior faculty in comparative effectiveness research both within my institution and in many outside institutions. For this award, I will focus on research efforts in the following areas (1) reducing cancer care costs by reducing overuse of medical therapies. (2) Increasing the value and quality of care by developing interventions to improve adherence to cancer therapies. (3) Improving cancer care delivery through interventions to increase generalizability and dissemination of clinical trial results. If funded, this CER Professorship would provide me additional protected time to focus on these research efforts, to mentor and train young investigators, and to participate in national efforts to improve quality and reduce health care disparities.