

TULSA WORLD

Letter to the editor: Long-term funding for cancer research needed

**By Sheppard F. Miers, Jr., Tulsa
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Cancer incidences and deaths will increase again in 2017. There will be an estimated 1,688,780 new cancer cases, and 600,920 people are expected die from cancer (1,650 per day) in the United States in 2017, according to the American Cancer Society.

The strategies for increasing new discoveries and improving treatment decided on by experts in the Cancer Moonshot initiative last year, and increased funding approved by Congress, are definitely needed.

Oklahoma continues to have a higher cancer death rate than most other states. The availability of early diagnosis and treatment for more people can change that. The Stephenson Cancer Center at the University of Oklahoma is expected to apply to the National Cancer Institute to become a National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center to bring more research and access to advanced treatments to the state.

For that to happen, Congress must provide increased and predictable long-term funding of the NCI and research needed to stop cancer. In Oklahoma, cancer research funding by the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust Fund in its present form needs to be continued.

You can advocate for that directly or by contacting the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network at its web site.

Editor's note: Miers is director of the Charlene Miers Foundation for Cancer Research.