

Inspiring a New Generation to Defy the Bounds of Innovation: A Moonshot to Cure Cancer.

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Three months ago, I called for a “moonshot” to cure cancer.

Tonight, the President tasked me with leading a new, national mission to get this done.

It’s personal for me. But it’s also personal for nearly every American, and millions of people around the world. We all know someone who has had cancer, or is fighting to beat it. They’re our family, friends, and co-workers.

If this disease has touched your life, I want to hear your story.

Today, cancer is the leading cause of death worldwide. And that’s only expected to increase in the coming decades — unless we make more progress today.

I know we can.

From my own personal experience, I’ve learned that research and therapies are on the cusp of incredible breakthroughs. Just in the past four years, we’ve seen amazing advancements. And this is an inflection point.

Over the course of the past few months, I’ve met with nearly 200 of the world’s top cancer physicians, researchers, and philanthropists.

And the goal of this initiative — this “Moonshot” — is to seize this moment. To accelerate our efforts to progress towards a cure, and to unleash new discoveries and breakthroughs for other deadly diseases.

The science is ready.

Several cutting-edge areas of research and care — including cancer immunotherapy, genomics, and combination therapies — could be revolutionary. Innovations in data and technology offer the promise to speed research advances and improve care delivery.

But the science, data, and research results are trapped in silos, preventing faster progress and greater reach to patients. It’s not just about developing game-changing treatments — it’s about delivering them to those who need them.

Right now, only 5 percent of cancer patients in the U.S. end up in a clinical trial. Most aren’t given access to their own data. At the same time, community oncologists — who treat more than 75 percent of cancer patients — have more limited access to cutting-edge research and advances.

So I plan to do two things.

- 1.) Increase resources — both private and public — to fight cancer.
- 2.) Break down silos and bring all the cancer fighters together — to work together, share information, and end cancer as we know it.

And the goal of this initiative is simple — to double the rate of progress. To make a decade worth of advances in five years.

Here's how we can do it:

Over the next year, I will lead a dedicated, combined effort by governments, private industry, researchers, physicians, patients, and philanthropies to target investment, coordinate across silos, and increase access to information for everyone in the cancer community.

Here's what that means: The Federal government will do everything it possibly can — through funding, targeted incentives, and increased private-sector coordination — to support research and enable progress.

We'll encourage leading cancer centers to reach unprecedented levels of cooperation, so we can learn more about this terrible disease and how to stop it in its tracks.

Data and technology innovators can play a role in revolutionizing how medical and research data is shared and used to reach new breakthroughs.

We will help the oncology community improve communication with doctors across the United States and around the world, so the same care provided to patients at the world's best cancer centers is available to everyone who needs it.

And we will ensure that the patient community is heard — so patients and their families are treated as partners in care, with access to their own data and the opportunity to contribute to research.

And we're getting started right away.

This Friday, I'll head to the Abramson Cancer Center at the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine to talk to their physicians and researchers and continue this national dialogue.

Next week, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, I'll meet with a group of international experts to discuss the current state of cancer research and treatment, and opportunities to accelerate this fight.

And later this month, I'll convene and chair the first of several meetings with cabinet secretaries and heads of all relevant agencies to discuss ways to improve Federal investment and support of cancer research and treatment.

Fifty-five years ago, President John F. Kennedy stood before a joint session of Congress and said, "I believe we should go to the moon."

It was a call to humankind.

And it inspired a generation of Americans — my generation — in pursuit of science and innovation, where they literally pushed the boundaries of what was possible.

This is our moonshot.

I know that we can help solidify a genuine global commitment to end cancer as we know it today — and inspire a new generation of scientists to pursue new discoveries and the bounds of human endeavor.

That is the history of the journey of this country. If there's one word that defines who we are as Americans, it's "possibility." And these are the moments when we show up.

We must move forward, right now. I know we can.

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