

INVESTIGATING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF GENE BASED ASSAYS IN EVERY DAY PRACTICE: THE CASE OF ONCOTYPEDx ASSAY in GREECE

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the accessibility of Greek women to OncotypeDx assay by comparing the number of the potentially eligible breast cancer women for undertaking the assay with the real number of women who undertook it (from April 2011 to 2014). For the purposes of the study administrative data from National Organization for the Provision of Health Services and data from international bases (e.g Globocan and OECD) were used. It was estimated that *1,100 patients* were potentially appropriate for conducting the OncotypeDX assay (taken in mind the age criterion of 65 years old). In case, that we pass over the age criterion then the potentially eligible number of women for undertaking the assay was increasing to *2,500*. The real number of women undertaking the assay was found steadily increasing from 176 in 2012, to 222 in 2013 and 340 in 2014, but it is still remarkable lower than the potentially ones. Concerning the burden of the assay on households' budgets, it was reported that women must fully pay the test and after some months get reimbursed 80% of the cost, which leaves them with a €650 out of pocket expense. Reimbursement policy reforms which will reduce the burden of cost sharing for patients and cancellation of the age criterion, is expected to facilitate the accessibility to the assay.

Keywords: Breast Cancer, Gene Based Assays, OncotypeDx