
Oregon ScreenWise Program

www.healthoregon.org/screenwise

ScreenWise.info@state.or.us

971-673-0581

What Are Genetic Services?

Genetic services are health care services, such as genetic counseling and genetic testing, delivered by professionals specially trained in clinical genetics. Genetic services are used to diagnose and advise individuals at risk for having genetic conditions. Patient education and shared-decision making plays a significant role in any genetic service.

The typical genetics consultation includes risk assessment, patient education, facilitation of testing, results disclosure, and other information tailored to patient needs. This process can take an hour or more. The patient usually returns to the referring provider with a summary report and recommendations for implementing a management plan to help with risk reduction and early identification of cancers.

Board-certified genetic specialists are trained to give patients the context needed for informed consent and help with family communication. They can help individuals and families to understand their options and to make informed health and reproductive decisions. Board-certified genetic specialists also work to ensure that the correct genetic test is ordered and interpreted correctly. There are a limited number of board-certified genetic specialists in Oregon, making collaboration between them and primary care clinicians and/or other health care providers crucial.

Board-certified genetic specialists include¹:

- An American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC) or American Board of Medical Genetics (ABMG) board-certified/ board-eligible genetic counselor
- An American College of Medical Genetics (ACMG) physician/PhD board-certified/board-eligible in clinical or medical genetics
- A Genetics Clinical Nurse (GCN), an Advanced Practice Nurse in Genetics (APNG), or an Advanced Genetics Nursing-Board Certified (AGN-BC) credentialed through the American Nurses Credential Center (ANCC)
- An advanced practice oncology nurse or Physician Assistant who is prepared at the graduate level (master or doctorate) with specialized education in cancer genetics and hereditary cancer predisposition syndromes
- A board-certified/board-eligible physician with experience in cancer genetics (defined as providing cancer risk assessment on a regular basis)

¹ Genetic Specialists (or genetics professionals) as defined by the American College of Surgeons in the Cancer program standards: ensuring patient-centered care (2016 Edition). [Internet]. [cited 2016 Aug 25]. Available from <https://www.facs.org/quality-programs/cancer/coc/standards>.