GECKO
Genetics Education Canada: Knowledge Organization
Centre d'éducation en génétique canadien: Connaissances organisées
POINT OF CARE TOOL

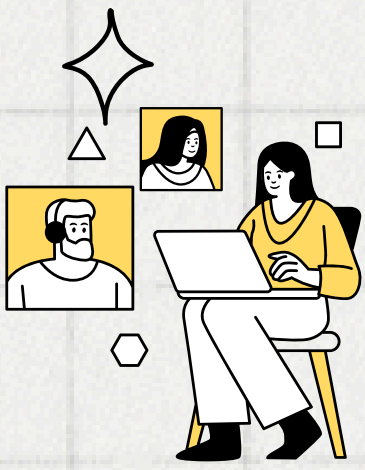
Tips for clinicians before ordering an Expanded Carrier Screening panel

01 FAMILY HISTORY

Have I taken an up-to-date three-generation family history?

- Would a referral to genetics be indicated regardless of expanded carrier screening results e.g. family history of a genetic condition, of an ethnicity where there is higher prevalence of certain conditions, history of a previous child with congenital anomalies?

See the GECKO's Family History Tools for Practice.



02 GENETIC COUNSELLING

Does the testing company also offer genetic counselling? This may be helpful to your patient if carrier screening is positive or uncertain.

- Is this with or without an additional fee?
- Are the company's genetic counsellors board certified (designated or Canadian Certified Genetic Counsellor (CCGC) or as Certified Genetic Counselor (CGC))?

03 RESULTS

Am I comfortable handling the results of this testing?

- Are variants of uncertain significance reported? Could I deal with unclear results?
- Genetics clinics may not be able to see your patient for the sole indication of a private genetic test result if it's not clinically actionable (e.g. carrier status in a single person vs a couple where both members are carriers of the same condition). Your patient should be made aware that access to formal genetic counselling may be limited.

04 INSURANCE

In Canada, the Genetic Non-Discrimination Act (GNA) was passed into law in 2017. Under GNA, providers of goods and services, including insurance providers, cannot:

- request or require that a person undergo a genetic test
- request or require the disclosure of previous or future genetic test results

Under GNA, federally regulated employers cannot

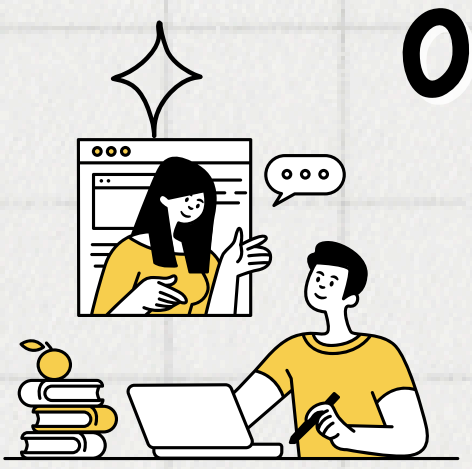
- use a person's genetic test results in decisions about hiring, firing, job assignments, or promotions
- request or require genetic test results of an employee

Learn more about GNA and your practice in this Can Fam Physician article.

05 LIMITATIONS

Does my patient understand that screening is voluntary and:

- a negative result does not eliminate the risk for a genetic condition?
- accurate paternity is required for accurate reproductive risk assessment?



06 INFORMED CONSENT

Do I and my patient have some familiarity with each disorder on the panel?

- Inheritance (e.g. recessive, X-linked)
- Onset (childhood vs. adulthood)
- Severity (treatment or management available, e.g. Tay Sachs disease vs. cystic fibrosis vs. factor V Leiden)

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