



NATIONAL COALITION  
FOR CANCER SURVIVORSHIP

*The power of survivorship. The promise of quality care.*

**STATEMENT OF ELLEN STOVALL  
PRESIDENT AND CEO  
NATIONAL COALITION FOR CANCER SURVIVORSHIP (NCCS)**

Good afternoon, I am Ellen Stovall, President and CEO of the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship (NCCS)—a nonprofit organization celebrating its 20th anniversary advocating on behalf of all Americans diagnosed with or who are at risk for all types of cancer. I am a 35-year survivor of two separate diagnoses of Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

By way of disclosure, my organization has received unrestricted grant funds from Merck's oncology business unit, but we receive no funding from the Merck Vaccine Division.

Over the last 15 years, NCCS has enjoyed long-time collaboration with your FDA CDER colleagues who review and approve cancer therapies and we have actively participated in FDA programs that train cancer survivor-advocates and utilize their expertise to inform the process of reviewing new cancer therapies. It is our distinct pleasure to be here for the first time before this committee and CBER officials and to comment on the impressive performance of a truly preventive intervention against a group of cancers that cause a good deal of pain and suffering for those affected.

Despite an extensive effort at screening—which should certainly continue for the indefinite future even after vaccines are approved—many women, around 10,000 a year in the U.S. alone, find themselves with a diagnosis of cervical cancer. Another roughly 6,000 women will be diagnosed with vaginal or vulvar cancers that may be even more difficult to detect at an early stage and carry many morbidities associated with multi-modality treatments for these cancers that can impair fertility, sexuality, continence, and overall quality of life.

Because these cancers are caused by sexual contact and resulting viral transmission, they may create more of a sense of isolation and stigma in those who are diagnosed with them than is the case with other cancers. That may be one reason why this committee has not received more requests for appearances by cervical cancer survivors. Their absence certainly does not reflect a lack of suffering associated with the disease.

In light of the very impressive clinical trial results reported here, NCCS urges the FDA and this advisory committee to make the vaccine available to the widest possible population supported by the data, including evidence based on antibody comparisons if appropriate.

If widely used, the vaccine can prevent thousands of cervical, vaginal and vulvar cancers as well as many anal and penile cancers and head and neck cancers. Aside from its value in preventing the human suffering and financial cost associated with these cancers, the vaccine will provide an inspiration to researchers to redouble their efforts to finding a meaningful prevention strategy for cancer, through vaccines or otherwise.