

Nashua Telegraph
November 22, 2014

Letter to the Editor

Colorectal cancer is one of the most commonly diagnosed types of cancer here in New Hampshire, with an estimated 600 new cases in 2014. Two hundred lives will be lost here in the Granite State just in 2014.

While these are terrible statistics, many of these deaths could be prevented if everyone over age 50 received recommended colon cancer screenings. Unfortunately, the costs associated with screening can prevent some folks from getting the care they need. The new health care law already requires private insurance companies to cover such preventive care without out-of-pocket costs.

However, older Americans on Medicare can still get hit with a surprise bill if a pre-cancerous polyp is removed during a routine screening. I would like to express my gratitude to U.S. Rep. Annie Kuster for recently signing on as a co-sponsor of the Removing Barriers to Colorectal Screening Act, which would eliminate this harmful Medicare loophole. This critical legislation will help save lives, reduce suffering, and reduce Medicare cancer costs.

I urge Rep. Frank Guinta to join Kuster as a co-sponsor and ask Sens. Ayotte and Shaheen to endorse the Senate version of this potentially lifesaving bill.

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