

### Transcript Details

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CLL Treatment: Managing Uncertainty Through Effective Communication

### Announcer:

Welcome to *Project Oncology* on ReachMD. On this episode, sponsored by Lilly, we'll discuss how we can manage a patient's uncertainty regarding treatment decisions in chronic lymphocytic leukemia, or CLL, care, with Dr. John Byrd. He's the Chair of the Department of Internal Medicine at the University of Cincinnati. Let's hear from him now.

### Dr. Byrd:

Counseling strategies that I've found to be helpful with patients when I'm first seeing them is one, figuring out what they're concerned about. And some people will come with the concept that they have a cancer, and we're not treating it. And CLL has a distinct disease where all of the body of data that we have with really all of our therapies have not shown a benefit to early treatment. And putting in the context that even when patients get to the point of needing treatment, most of them who get the targeted medicines are going to live as long as they would without the disease. The other big thing that the patients often are nervous about is how this is going to affect their ability to work and do their activities; are they going to pass the gene that causes CLL onto their children?

So being a good listener, asking what is concerning you most about this? And then spending plenty of time with the patient. That's probably the most important thing. Most people when they hear about leukemia, they think of somebody who got that and died. I think it's just important to remember that until you get them comfortable with the diagnosis, they're often very scared and worried about the diagnosis.

I think a real important thing to establishing a good rapport with your patient with CLL is trying to get to understand them outside of their diagnosis: their family structure, what's important to them, and allowing them to see that you see them not as just an individual with leukemia, but an individual with an entire life.

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