

POSITION Statement Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy

Overview

Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, or HCM, is a disease that occurs when the heart muscle thickens, making it harder to pump blood.

Nearly one in every 250 people have HCM, but a large percentage of patients go undiagnosed because symptoms mimic other non-cardiac related diseases. The most common symptoms are shortness of breath, heart palpitations and fatigue, meaning patients are often misdiagnosed with asthma, anxiety attacks or panic attacks.

Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy is diagnosed through presentation of symptoms, health screenings, and the assessment of family history. The most common screenings for HCM include an echocardiogram, electrocardiogram, or a cardiac MRI.


Position

 **Patients and providers should practice early screenings to avoid misdiagnosing HCM.**

Health care providers, family members, and educators should all learn and look for the signs of HCM so that early screening can take place.

 **Ongoing clinical studies are necessary to expand HCM treatment options.**

Creating more research opportunities can bridge gaps in information about the disease and expand testing for gene-based diagnoses.

 **Patient access to testing and treatment should be made easier.**

Access barriers place a burden not only on the patient but also the provider and their staff. Better educating insurance companies on HCM could increase access for patients seeking testing and treatment.

 **State policymakers should increase access to screening for children and student athletes.**

Legislative action can be taken on the state level to ensure that well-child examinations include cardiac components.

 **Health care providers need opportunities to share best practices in HCM care.**

With the onset of new treatments, managing patients is becoming increasingly complicated. Sharing best practices can equip clinicians to help patients adhere to their treatment regimen and achieve optimal health.