

Were the Prince of Denmark the Medicare Administrator

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To test, or not to test: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of high dose radiation,
Or to take arms against the risk of cancer,
And by early detection, cure it. To die: to sleep
No more from an incurable lung cancer; or to defeat it.
But what of an invasive test for suspected cancer,
And its complications, when no cancer is found? Ay, there's the rub!
For in that complication death may come.
But should one shuffle off the CT coils,
And take the risk of late detection? Must give one pause.
There's the respect that creates the wisdom of debate:
For who would bear the whips and scorns of higher costs,
And who would be oppressed? Is the proud guideline contumely¹ or no:
The pangs of despised overtesting or delay in death?
Ay, insolence of an open debate from which a test may be spurned
Or from which a patient's merit yields embrace;
When payment might insurance cover
With no copay? Would insurance the fardel² bear
Whilst one grunts and sweats under a weary premium?
But that the dread of a looming death,
The undiscover'd country from whose panic
No uninsured returns, puzzles the collective will
And makes us rather inflame those ills we have
Than fly to cost-benefit that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And so the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of unknown effectiveness,
And coverage questions of great pith³ and moment⁴
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action. - Soft you now!
The fair federal budget, in thy orisons⁵
Be all our deficits remember'd.

¹**Contumely:** Rude; Rude language or behavior; scorn, insult

² **Fardel:** A pack, budel; a burden. Middle English, from Old French, diminutive of *farde*, *package*, from Arabic *farda*, *single piece*, *pack*, *bundle*, from *farada*, *to be separate*; see *prd* in Semitic roots.]

³ **Pith** here *pith* demonstrates its evolved denotation of "strength or vigor."

⁴ **Moment:** denotes "consequence, importance" in this context.

⁵ **Orisons:** Speech or prayer