**Broadcast**-**CancerIQ helps school administrator find her cancer early**

A new cancer assessment is helping more OSF HealthCare patients determine if they need to take action sooner to prevent cancer. Kelli Ballard, a Washington, Illinois school administrator was hoping last year would be better following the first year of the pandemic but it sure didn’t turn out that way.

During that call to her school, she was told tests showed she had stage 1a invasive ductile breast cancer.

Hearing the news in early January of last year was hard.

**“They weren’t bringing people in because of COVID and so that was really hard. I actually had a co-worker who had had breast cancer the year before and she was there with me that day when I found out and she was just my huge support system.” (:19)**

Ballard had taken CancerIQ assessments a couple of times before her annual mammogram and it came back she was “high risk” for developing cancer. Ultimately she felt compelled to get genetic testing.

**“I want to live a long life and enjoy my family. That just really set in and I thought, ‘OK, I need to figure this out and get through it.’” (:13)**

Ballard’s care team developed a more intensive screening approach that included getting an MRI every six months following her annual mammogram. It was based on her family history despite the fact she didn’t have gene mutations indicating a risk for breast or ovarian cancer.

**“I didn’t realize they actually put together a whole plan of preventive steps or ways to monitor throughout the years so I wasn’t really done, but I was glad; I was happy about that, because that risk was so much higher.” (:21)**

Ballard is so thankful for CancerIQ because it led to early discovery of her cancer which resulted in a lumpectomy on her left breast and a month of radiation, five-days-a-week after work. She’s now cancer-free.

**“Finding out of course that it was small and that we caught it early, just made me grateful that I did this. You know if I had waited six more months until my regular mammogram, it (the tumor) could have been much larger by then or it could have been much more significant, so I was really grateful for the plan that was put in place.” (:23)**

Ryan Luginbuhl (pronounced loo-gun-BEWL), director of Oncology Services for OSF HealthCare says specifically-designed care plans can make all the difference for people who score “high risk” on the CancerIQ assessment.

Luginbuhl says CancerIQ can be as important as cancer screenings.

**“It’s a validated tool and I think it’s a very important tool that we need to be pushing just as much as the traditional screenings we think of when it comes to cancer.” (:14)**

Tom Cox, director of Medical Imaging and Outpatient Oncology Services at OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria says CancerIQ is important for identifying the need for *earlier* screening for those at high risk.

**“The overall strategy of OSF HealthCare is that we want to start getting the screening done at many entry points at a variety of ages so that we can start designing that risk mitigation plan where you’ll understand what you’re more at risk for and what you can do to prevent it.” (:20)**

More than 75,600 OSF HealthCare patients have taken a CancerIQ assessment since 2015 when it was first initiated as part of an [OSF Innovation](https://www.osfhealthcare.org/innovation/) pilot at OSF Centers for Breast Health in Peoria. Thirty percent were found to have an elevated cancer risk and were given the opportunity for additional screening and to see a clinician trained in genetic cancer risk assessment. That translated to more than 3,100 changes in care plans.

OSF will continue expanding use of CancerIQ to eventually include all hospitals and clinics, including at the new comprehensive cancer institute that’ll open next year in Peoria and will house all diagnostic, treatment and support services under one roof.