

POLITICS

Obama Takes First Step in a Cancer 'Moonshot'

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR **JAN. 28, 2016**



President Obama arriving at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on Monday. Zach Gibson/The New York Times

WASHINGTON — [President Obama](#) signed a presidential memorandum on Thursday creating a White House task force on [cancer](#), the first step in what Vice President [Joseph R. Biden Jr.](#) has called a “[moonshot](#)” to cure [the disease](#), administration officials said.

The president appointed Mr. Biden to lead the panel, which will include representatives from at least 13 government agencies. The group’s first meeting will be on Monday, officials said.

The emotional power behind the push will come from Mr. Biden, whose son [Beau died last year](#) after a battle with brain cancer. This month in his final [State of the Union address](#), Mr. Obama cited Mr. Biden’s “moonshot” comment, saying that “I’m putting Joe in charge of mission control.”

Mr. Obama pledged in the speech to initiate a governmentwide push to cure the disease along the lines of the effort in the 1960s to send a man to the moon. The president made no specific promises but urged Americans to

believe that a cure could be found.

“For the loved ones we’ve all lost, for the family we can still save, let’s make America the country that cures cancer once and for all,” Mr. Obama said.

Officials familiar with the president’s actions said the task force would set a goal of doubling the rate of scientific progress toward prevention, treatment and a cure.

Morning Briefing

Get what you need to know to start your day in the United States, Canada and the Americas, delivered to your inbox.

Sign Up

Receive occasional updates and special offers for The New York Times's products and services.



我不是機器人



[SEE SAMPLE](#) | [PRIVACY POLICY](#)

The plan, officials said, is to “put ourselves on a path to achieve in just five years research and treatment gains that otherwise might take a decade or more.” The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because details of Mr. Obama’s memorandum had not yet been made public.

The memorandum does not commit the government to major new spending, and it is not clear how much progress can be made without new dedicated financial resources.

Instead, officials said the task force would focus on “making the most of federal investments, targeted incentives, private sector efforts from industry and philanthropy, patient engagement initiatives, and other mechanisms to support cancer research and enable progress in treatment and care.”

The group will also seek to “break down silos” among scientists to encourage more cooperation, officials said.

In addition to Mr. Biden, the group includes members from the

Departments of Defense, Commerce, Health and Human Services, Energy, and Veterans Affairs. Members will also represent the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the National Cancer Institute, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Science Foundation, among others.

Follow the New York Times's politics and Washington coverage on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and sign up for the [First Draft politics newsletter](#).

A version of this article appears in print on January 28, 2016, on Page A21 of the New York edition with the headline: First Step by Obama in a Cancer 'Moonshot' . [Order Reprints](#) | [Today's Paper](#) | [Subscribe](#)

RELATED COVERAGE

'Moonshot' to Cure Cancer, to Be Led by Biden, Relies on Outmoded View of Disease JAN. 13, 2016



Beau Biden, Vice President Joe Biden's Son, Dies at 46 MAY 30, 2015



[More in Politics »](#)

[Top News »](#)

The New York Times

NEWS

World

U.S.

Politics

N.Y.

Business

Tech

Science

Health

Sports

Education

Obituaries

Today's Paper

Corrections

OPINION

Today's Opinion

Op-Ed Columnists

Editorials

Contributing Writers

Op-Ed Contributors

Opinionator

Letters

Sunday Review

Taking Note

Room for Debate

Public Editor

Video: Opinion

ARTS

Today's Arts

Art & Design

Books

[Dance](#)

[Movies](#)

[Music](#)

[N.Y.C. Events Guide](#)

[Television](#)

[Theater](#)

[Video: Arts](#)

LIVING

[Automobiles](#)

[Crossword](#)

[Food](#)

[Education](#)

[Fashion & Style](#)

[Health](#)

[Jobs](#)

[Magazine](#)

[N.Y.C. Events Guide](#)

[Real Estate](#)

[T Magazine](#)

[Travel](#)

[Weddings & Celebrations](#)

LISTINGS & MORE

[Classifieds](#)

[Tools & Services](#)

[Times Topics](#)

[Public Editor](#)

[N.Y.C. Events Guide](#)

[Blogs](#)

[Multimedia](#)

[Photography](#)

[Video](#)

[NYT Store](#)

[Times Journeys](#)

[Subscribe](#)

[Manage My Account](#)

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

[Home Delivery](#)

[Digital Subscriptions](#)

[Times Insider](#)

[Crossword](#)

[Email Newsletters](#)

[Alerts](#)

[Gift Subscriptions](#)

[Corporate Subscriptions](#)

[Education Rate](#)

[Mobile Applications](#)

[Replica Edition](#)

© 2017 The New York Times Company | [Privacy](#) | [Terms of Service](#)

[Site Map](#) | [Help](#) | [Site Feedback](#)