

What will it take for cancer ‘moonshot’ cure to become reality?

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To anyone who follows science, President Barack Obama’s announcement of a “moonshot” to cure cancer brought on a strong sense of déjà vu. It was, in fact, the third time in less than three years that he has launched a high-profile effort to solve a complex biomedical problem.

A year ago, in his 2015 State of the Union address, Obama announced the [Precision Medicine Initiative](#), which is intended to usher in what he called “a new era of medicine — one that delivers the right treatment at the right time.”

And in an April 2013 speech at the White House, Obama unveiled the BRAIN Initiative, which he described as “the next great American project,” designed to help figure out how the brain works.

The cancer moonshot now has the clearest criterion for success: a cure.

The specifics for how the government will get to that goal are still pretty fuzzy, though. (Indeed, the project doesn’t even have an official name). But Azra Raza, a Columbia University oncologist who consulted with Vice President Joe Biden on the cancer moonshot, said that one crucial element of the project will need to be a major push to develop cancer vaccines that can prime the immune system of cancer patients to make precise attacks on their own tumors.

**Read full, original post:** [Obama’s big bet on science: It’s about far more than a cancer ‘moonshot’](#)