

What You and Your Organization Can Do to Fight Cancer in Connecticut

The Connecticut Cancer Plan, 2021-2026 includes specific information for each area of cancer control. To make a difference in the fight against cancer, the continued commitment of organizations and individual members is required. Progress is possible once we harness the dedication of individuals and all types of organizations to implement data-driven strategies as well as policy, systems, and environmental changes.

Here are specific ways you and your organization can contribute to reaching the goals presented in this Plan

Individuals:

You are part of Connecticut's progress in its fight against cancer. You fit into this plan. You can:

- Advocate for policy changes that support equitable provision of services
- Address inequities in your community by speaking up
- Raise awareness about healthy lifestyles and data-driven clinical interventions that can prevent cancer
- Vote and contact your elected officials about cancer issues
- Support funding for programs and policies that reduce exposure to risks
- Educate your employer about how your own policies, systems, and work environment can be improved to reduce the burden of cancer
- Speak out for comprehensive insurance coverage for cancer prevention, detection, treatment, and survivorship services
- Participate or promote participation in clinical trials

Hospitals/Cancer Programs:

- Ensure timely, culturally, and linguistically appropriate services for cancer patients including those who are under- or uninsured
- Support research that addresses population needs across the cancer control continuum with special attention to at-risk populations, cancer disparities, and diversity
- Standardize data collection on race/ethnicity and social determinants of health (SDoH)

- Collaborate to sponsor culturally and linguistically appropriate community screening and education programs for all people, including those who are under- or uninsured
- Support care coordinator, patient navigation, and survivorship programs, addressing obstacles and barriers, including language and cultural barriers
- Leverage technology to support access to telehealth and support for cancer patients, reducing barriers
- Conduct one of the Commission on Cancer (CoC)¹ required annual Quality Improvement Initiatives² on an item within the Plan (see Goal 4, Priority Area 1)
- Ensure that cancer cases are reported in a timely manner
- Seek or maintain accreditation through appropriate national accrediting organizations.
- Enforce tobacco-free policies at your facility and support the cessation efforts of employees and patients
- Provide healthy food and beverage options in vending machines and cafeterias
- Encourage employees to participate in regular physical activity
- Provide meeting space for cancer groups

Primary Care Clinicians:

- Provide culturally appropriate and relevant information, counseling, and referrals for cancer screening tests
- Provide services in a patient's preferred language in a timely fashion and throughout the patient experience

- Adhere to national guidelines such as National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) and best practices for prevention, treatment, and palliative care³
- Utilize treatment summaries and survivorship care plans, customizing screening recommendations as appropriate
- Address lifestyle and preventive issues such as tobacco use, physical activity, alcohol use, and vaccine use to help reduce cancer incidence

Oncology Clinicians:

- Refer patients to smoking cessation, physical activity, and nutrition programs
- Support and facilitate appropriate clinical trial enrollment or referral
- Adopt regular use of treatment summaries and/or survivorship care plans
- Make timely and appropriate referrals to hospice for end-of-life care
- Refer patients for genetic screening when indicated
- Ensure that all patients, including those who are under- or uninsured, are provided care

Local Health Departments:

- Support culturally and linguistically appropriate policy, systems, and environmental changes for cancer prevention and control
- Provide cancer prevention information and screening programs to citizens
- Collaborate in developing and providing community prevention campaigns
- Work with providers to promote screening programs
- Work with providers to advocate for provision of care to those uninsured
- Provide meeting space for cancer groups

Community or Faith-based Organizations:

- Support culturally and linguistically appropriate policy, systems, and environmental changes for cancer prevention and control
- Provide cancer prevention awareness information and screening programs
- Encourage participation in clinical trials through education and referral as appropriate

- Collaborate to develop and provide community prevention programs
- Advocate for development of the built environment that promotes active living
- Provide space for physical activity programs and nutrition programs
- Provide healthy meals for meetings and events

Employers:

- Support and enforce tobacco-free policies at your facility, offering cessation options to facilitate behavioral change
- Provide healthy food and beverage options in vending machines and cafeterias
- Encourage employees to participate in regular physical activity
- Commit staffing time to assist in implementing one of the Cancer Plan's strategic actions
- Collaborate with hospitals to host screening events
- Use reminders and implement programs to reduce barriers and to encourage employees to have regular cancer screenings (e.g., paid time off for screenings, bringing screenings to the workplace)
- Provide space for community meetings and for physical activity and nutrition programs
- Collaborate with the American Cancer Society and other cancer organizations to promote evidence-based wellness programs for employees

Schools/Universities:

- Support policy, systems, and environmental changes to support healthy lifestyles for cancer prevention
- Work collaboratively to offer programs for professional development and certifications for community health workers and educators
- Include cancer prevention messages in health classes
- Provide healthy food and beverage options in vending machines and cafeterias
- Encourage students and faculty to participate in regular physical activity
- Make your entire campus a tobacco-free environment
- Educate students about risk factors for cancer such as alcohol and vaping
- Host HPV vaccination campaigns

- Support development of the built environment that promotes active living
- Promote volunteer activities for students and staff to help with community educational and screening events for cancer control

Policy Makers:

- Sponsor or support legislation and funding that addresses social determinants of health
- Sponsor or support legislation and funding that promotes cancer research and cancer control throughout the continuum of cancer control from prevention through end of life.
- Raise constituents' awareness about cancer prevention and control programs in your district and help establish new programs where needed
- Commit to ensuring that all Connecticut residents have access to adequate early detection and health care services

- Commit to ensuring that tobacco settlement funds are used for tobacco prevention and cessation and for cancer control
- Advocate and support the development of the built environment that promotes healthy eating and active living
- Prioritize policies that have social equity and/or cancer disparities implications

Funders/Philanthropists and In-Kind Supporters:

- Fund a strategic action from the Connecticut Cancer Plan, 2021-2026
- Commit staffing time to assist in implementation of strategic actions
- Provide meeting space and meeting materials for Partnership activities
- Sponsor conferences, covering costs of speakers and travel, hotel, honorariums, and materials

If you are interested in reducing the cancer burden in Connecticut:

Become a member of the Connecticut Cancer Partnership.

For more information, ideas, or ways to become involved with the Partnership, please go to <http://ctcancerpartnership.org> and click on “Join Us”.

