



**Measuring
Our Progress.**

**Recognizing
Our Impact.**

2025 Accomplishments



DELAWARE
CANCER
CONSORTIUM

A new era begins.

“I share your unwavering commitment to preventing cancer in Delaware and helping those diagnosed with this devastating disease to live longer, healthier lives.”

Deborah Brown, MS, CHES
Chair, Delaware Cancer Consortium;
Chief Mission Officer,
American Lung Association



It is my sincere honor and privilege to serve as the incoming chair of the Delaware Cancer Consortium (DCC). I am an original and longstanding member of the DCC. In 1998, I worked with state legislators to help direct Master Settlement Agreement funds from the four largest tobacco manufacturers into a newly established Delaware Health Fund. And serving on committees and subcommittees within the DCC, I have helped outline strategies to reduce chronic conditions and supported smoking cessation and youth tobacco-prevention programs.

In Delaware, we have shown historic leadership in championing policies and programs that help to prevent cancer and promote access to optimal care. Overall, cancer mortality has declined. Thanks to early screening and other medical discoveries, including new and targeted treatments, people with cancer are living longer than ever before.

Today, our DCC priorities build on these successes by encouraging and promoting:

- ▶ PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION
- ▶ LUNG CANCER SCREENING
- ▶ TOBACCO PREVENTION AND CESSATION
- ▶ IDENTIFICATION OF BARRIERS TO CANCER SCREENINGS

Today, we are in an unprecedented position — not only to help prevent cancer in Delaware but also to improve the lives of the individuals and families affected by this disease. I look forward to working with each of you to do just that.

Sincerely,

Deborah Brown, MS, CHES
Chair, Delaware Cancer Consortium

Honoring 24 years of leadership.



In 2001, Dr. Nicholas Petrelli had not even signed his contract with ChristianaCare when he received a fax from Dr. Stephen Grubbs that stated: “Congratulations, Dr. Petrelli. You have been appointed to the Delaware Cancer Advisory Council and Consortium.”

“The best one-word description I can give for the work that the Advisory Council and the Consortium have achieved together is ‘Remarkable.’”

Nicholas Petrelli, MD,
Director, Cawley Center for Translational Cancer Research,
Helen F. Graham Cancer Center & Research Institute

In 2002, there were six committees in the Consortium with chairs and members who, like Dr. Petrelli, were all volunteers. Their first big challenge was developing a statewide program to decrease the disparity between Caucasians and African Americans in colorectal cancer incidence and mortality.

THE 2002 GOAL: Screen 80% of Delawareans age 50 and older over the next five years.

THE RESULT: Decreasing and ending the disparity in 2008.

That achievement, according to the 2020 Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, meant that 77% of Delaware adults ages 45 to 74 years met the recommendations for colorectal screening — which is higher than the U.S. national median of 67%. Delaware’s colorectal cancer screening program is still a model for the country. In addition to that significant outcome, Dr. Petrelli watched the state achieve a 36% decrease in lung cancer mortality by 2016.

Thanks to the groundwork the original leadership established, the work continues. Reaching disparate populations, developing cancer survivorship programs, and continuing the partnerships and collaboration with the communities of target populations all remain high on the agenda. Dr. Petrelli’s vision and inspiration helped to get us this far. We thank him for his passion and pursuit to find answers to our toughest challenges.

Source: Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health. (2024). Cancer Incidence and Mortality in Delaware, 2017–2021

Making Strides.

Reaching more people at risk.

Although Delaware's all-site cancer mortality rate has historically been higher than the U.S. rate, the gap narrowed over the last decade.

Between 2007 and 2021, mortality rates for all-site cancer decreased an average of 1.8% per year in Delaware, compared with 1.5% per year in the U.S. Based on the Cancer Incidence and Mortality in Delaware, 2017-2021 report, Delaware ranks 16th among the states in all-site cancer mortality. Considerable progress has been made since the 1990s, when the state ranked second.

Between 2007 and 2021, incidence rates for all-site cancer decreased by an average of 1.1% per year in Delaware and an average of 0.7% per year in the U.S. While progress continues to be made, the same Cancer

Incidence and Mortality report also cited an all-site cancer incidence rate for Delaware (462.1 per 100,000 population) that was higher than the comparable U.S. rate (444.6 per 100,000 population). Delaware currently ranks 15th among the states for highest all-site cancer incidence.

Data from the same report also noted that non-Hispanic Black Delawareans were disproportionately affected by breast and prostate cancers compared with other races. Getting people screened for cancer is critical for reducing the number of late-stage diagnoses. By using outreach strategies in areas where people are less likely to get screened for breast, cervical, prostate, colorectal, and lung cancer, the Delaware Cancer Consortium (DCC) is working to save lives in disparate populations.

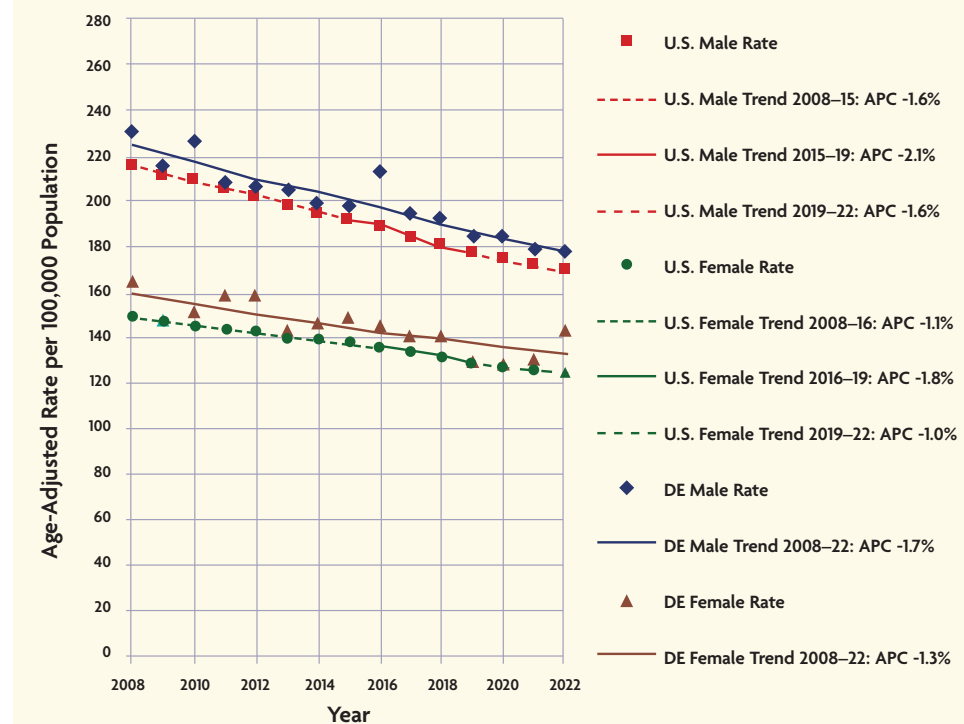
According to the American Cancer Society, there are more than 19 million cancer survivors in the United States. Realizing the need to support them, DCC is creating programs and initiatives for cancer survivors in Delaware. Lung cancer continues to be our greatest challenge — both as a state and as a nation. In Delaware, we continue to emphasize the importance of lung cancer screenings for smokers and former smokers. Above all, we use data to guide us and course-correct current initiatives.



Faith City prostate cancer awareness event in June 2025: Calvin Jackson (DPCC), left, was interviewed by REACH Gospel Radio host, right.

TRENDS OVER TIME — DELAWARE AND U.S.

Age-Adjusted All-Site Cancer Mortality Rate Trend by Sex; U.S. and Delaware, 2008–2022



Notes: Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program (www.seer.cancer.gov) SEER*Stat Database: Mortality — All Causes of Death, Aggregated U.S. Total (1990–2023); Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Delaware Health Statistics Center, 2025; rates are per 100,000 of population, age-adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population, and are calculated using modified U.S. Census populations available from NCI (<https://seer.cancer.gov/popdata/>).

APC = Annual Percent Change

*Indicates that the annual percent change (APC) is significantly different from zero at the alpha = 0.05 level.

Source (U.S.): Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program (www.seer.cancer.gov) SEER*Stat Database: Mortality — All COD, Aggregated Total U.S. (1990–2023)

Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Delaware Health Statistics Center, 2025

Paulette Robinson-Wilkerson, MS, presenting at the Faith City Prostate Cancer Awareness Event on June 8, 2025.



The Consortium

“Oversight of the work we’re doing in cancer is critical to getting things done. The Consortium takes its work seriously to continuously guide and support activities that can put our strategies into action.”

Katy Connolly, Past Chair, Delaware Cancer Consortium



The Delaware Cancer Consortium was established as the Delaware Advisory Council on Cancer Incidence and Mortality in March 2001. The Consortium has always been about the people it serves: Delawareans who need guidance on how to stay healthy and keep cancer from affecting their lives.

Following the goals of our latest five-year plan, we have:

- ▶ Supported requiring health insurance companies to cover mammograms for women 40 and older, with or without a provider referral.
- ▶ Created a more uniform document to reduce application review time for the Delaware Cancer Treatment Program.
- ▶ Supported a mandate for health insurance companies to cover prostate cancer screenings for high-risk men over the age of 40.
- ▶ Passionately believed that the purpose behind our work — keeping Delawareans healthy — benefits all of us.
- ▶ Continued to support and fund the Delaware Cancer Treatment Program, which provides treatment for up to 24 months for those without insurance or — a new feature — for those whose insurance will not cover out-of-pocket costs that exceed 15% of their income.

During the Delaware Department of Transportation’s 2024 Safety Week, Paulette Robinson-Wilkerson, MS, Division of Public Health (DPH), Bureau of Cancer Prevention and Control, presented skin cancer screening awareness training to employees. Stephen Wright, DelDOT water resources engineer, modeled SPF 50 sleeves that were given to DelDOT staff. DPH photos.



Our Recent Progress

ACCORDING TO THE 2024 DELAWARE DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH’S CANCER INCIDENCE AND MORTALITY IN DELAWARE, 2017–2021 REPORT, **DELAWARE’S ALL-SITE CANCER MORTALITY RATE DECREASED** an average of 1.8% per year, a higher rate of decline than nationally.

ACCORDING TO THE 2024 DELAWARE DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH’S CANCER INCIDENCE AND MORTALITY IN DELAWARE, 2017–2021 REPORT, **DELAWARE RANKED 16TH IN THE U.S. FOR ALL-SITE CANCER DEATHS**, a significant drop from a second-place ranking in the 1990s.

ACCORDING TO THE 2024 DELAWARE DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH’S CANCER INCIDENCE AND MORTALITY IN DELAWARE, 2017–2021 REPORT, **INCIDENCE RATES FOR ALL-SITE CANCER DECREASED** an average of 3% per year among non-Hispanic Black males and remained stable among non-Hispanic Black females.

ACCORDING TO 2022 BRFSS DATA, OF DELAWARE FEMALES AGE 40 AND OLDER, **74% REPORTED GETTING A MAMMOGRAM WITHIN THE PRIOR TWO YEARS**, compared with the national median of 70%.

ACCORDING TO 2022 BRFSS DATA, OF DELAWARE FEMALES AGE 21 TO 65, **52% REPORTED GETTING A PAP TEST WITHIN THE PRIOR THREE YEARS**. That’s the 10th-highest cervical screening ranking in the nation.

ACCORDING TO 2022 BRFSS DATA, OF DELAWARE ADULTS AGE 45 TO 74, **70% REPORTED GETTING A RECOMMENDED COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING**.

That’s higher than the national rate of compliance (67%).

ACCORDING TO 2022 BRFSS DATA, **ONLY 13% OF DELAWARE ADULTS REPORTED SMOKING CIGARETTES**.

In 1982, 30% of Delawareans smoked cigarettes.

Source: Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health. (2024). Cancer Incidence and Mortality in Delaware, 2017–2021.

Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health. (2022). Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS), 2022.

Early Detection and Prevention

Cancer screenings help save lives.

Getting people screened for cancer and making sure other preventive messages reach everyone in Delaware are the overarching goals of this committee. Cancer screenings help save lives. The National Institutes of Health reports that between 1975 and 2020, through a combination of prevention, screening, and improved treatments, an astounding 80% of U.S. cancer deaths were averted (nearly 6 million lives). We're finding new and better ways to reach people who have not been screened or are most vulnerable.

To that end, the Bureau of Cancer Prevention and Control has increased their cancer screenings and awareness at outreach events. And we're spreading prevention and screening information and education to every corner of our state.

“DelDOT hosted the Delaware Division of Public Health at our Safety & Wellness Day in May. They provided skin screenings and education to our employees who spend extensive hours outside. Employees benefited from learning about skin cancer and the effects of sun exposure. We look forward to working with them in the future.”

Brynisha Keys, Investigator I, DelDOT North District

Pictured: Participant groups at the National Lung Cancer Awareness Screening Day event in November 2025.



MEANINGFUL ACHIEVEMENTS

- ▶ Streamlined access to screenings and other health services through Screening for Life (SFL), which partnered with seven public state service centers to connect underserved populations with cervical screenings, human papillomavirus testing, vaccinations, sexually transmitted infections testing, pregnancy testing, and referrals for other medical needs.
- ▶ Facilitated enhancements to the SFL database so that Delawareans can enter their own enrollment applications, eliminating travel to a Federally Qualified Health Center.
- ▶ Streamlined SFL medical providers' claim entry electronically, helping identify duplicate claims and providing immediate receipt for claim entries.
- ▶ Expanded provider contracts, increasing the number of providers who accept SFL patients — all seven public health clinics became SFL providers, along with four Planned Parenthood facilities and four imaging centers.
- ▶ Supported SFL and the Comprehensive Cancer Control Program in working together — through community health fairs and support groups — to encourage men to prioritize early detection for prostate cancer.
- ▶ Supported SFL in hosting a total of six breast cancer screening events since October 2024. To date, 45 women have been screened across all events, and many had never or rarely been screened.
- ▶ Supported lung cancer screenings through work with the Cancer Prevention and Control Program and the American Cancer Society, including event participation. In total, 433 screenings were completed through partnerships with more than two dozen organizations.
- ▶ Updated the SFL brochure to multiple languages to improve accessibility and reduce language barriers.
- ▶ Supported partnerships to educate Delawareans on sun safety during employee wellness week. The Cancer Prevention and Control Program, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, and Delaware Department of Transportation provided services that included SPF-appropriate clothing, skin checks, education on sun safety, dispensing of sunscreen, and more. A total of 52 locations received 73 sunscreen dispensers. More than 8,000 people were served.

In 2024, 73 sunscreen dispensers were placed all around the state of Delaware.



Cancer Risk Reduction Committee

“By building community capacity and addressing health equity through mini-grants, we’re not just providing information — we’re empowering people to make healthier choices where they live, work, and play.”

Bethany Hall-Long, PhD, MSN, BSN, Former Delaware Lieutenant Governor



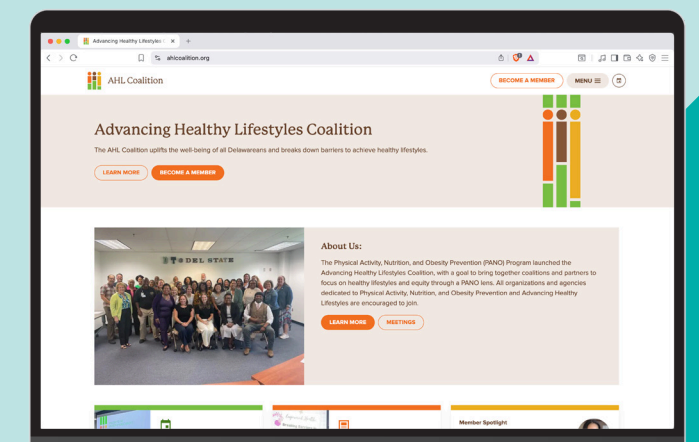
Unhealthy behaviors such as vaping, using flavored tobacco, and exposure to secondhand smoke are dangerous and can be deadly. A lack of physical exercise not only puts Delawareans at risk for obesity, but it can also cause other chronic diseases that have lifelong effects. The Cancer Risk Reduction Committee supports Delawareans in learning how living a healthy lifestyle can help them avoid serious health risks. Action items on this committee’s agenda include offering grants to organizations who offer on-the-ground help and initiatives, supporting the Delaware Quitline, making tobacco products legally off-limits for certain age groups, offering free resources to help people quit smoking, addressing food deserts to give people better access to healthier foods, and encouraging regular physical activity.



On August 21, 2025, Bureau of CPC sponsored an inaugural Health Promotion Advocate (HPA) Summit. Luisa E. Ortiz Marquez, HPA, ChristianaCare, Community Outreach, Helen F. Graham Cancer Center, was awarded the HPA of the quarter award. The award was presented by (left) Jenny Rodriguez, enrollment specialist, Bureau of CPC. Photo credit: Nikita Clark

MEANINGFUL ACHIEVEMENTS

- ▶ Supported tobacco cessation and spreading awareness of the dangers of vaping, e-cigarettes, flavored tobacco, and secondhand smoke through health fair attendance, social media, targeted campaigns, presentations to schools, Quitline outreach, toolkits for landlords and tenants, online Live Vape Free resources, and more.
- ▶ Supported the CDC EXHALE asthma grant through the Tobacco Prevention and Control Program.
- ▶ Offered free nicotine patches, gum, and other prescriptions for those without insurance.
- ▶ With the support of the General Assembly, prohibited the sale of flavored tobacco products, smoking near exits or entrances or on smoke-free campuses, and the distribution of tobacco products on or near school grounds.
- ▶ Promoted the Healthy Lifestyle Map, showing healthy foods and activities; highlighted the Bureau of Chronic Disease report linking lifestyle behaviors to disease risk; partnered with the Delaware Department of Education to perform physical fitness assessments; hosted an annual conference to support health and physical-education educators; and more.
- ▶ Developed the Plan for Tobacco-Free Delaware 2023.
- ▶ Offered free Delaware Quitline counseling by phone.
- ▶ Awarded 25 community-based mini-grants to support Delaware community partner organizations with projects that improve community health and reduce chronic disease.
- ▶ Supported the annual Lt. Governor’s Challenge.
- ▶ Developed and implemented a workplace wellness toolkit.
- ▶ Supported the launch of the Advancing Healthy Lifestyles Coalition to reduce adult and childhood obesity as well as chronic diseases, to achieve health equity community-wide.



ahlcoalition.org

Delaware Cancer Registry Advisory Committee

“Delaware has seen a decline in cancer mortality rates, with the state’s cancer death rate decreasing at a faster pace than the national average. Programs and collaboration across the state have contributed to early detection and treatment, helping to lower the burden of cancer on families and the health care system, ultimately leading to a healthier population.”

John D. Shevock, FACHE, FACMPE, Senior Director, Oncology Services, and Executive Director, Bayhealth Cancer Institute



Cynthia Concepcion-Alston (left), ChristianaCare Health System Community Health Worker, counseling a local resident about screening services.

Data is information. Information is knowledge. Knowledge is power in understanding where we are and where we need to go — both in developing initiatives and in reaching at-risk Delawareans. The Delaware Cancer Registry Advisory Committee has become a respected source for our own Delaware Cancer Consortium as well as the cancer community at large. The Delaware Cancer Registry’s continuous certification, accreditation, and reporting compliance with most health care organizations make the committee an invaluable resource. Other assets are its timely responses to data requests and everyday collaboration with Consortium members and the advisory council.

MEANINGFUL ACHIEVEMENTS

- ▶ Received reported data from 100% of hospitals, 85% of nonhospitals, and 73% of laboratories in Delaware.
- ▶ Received Gold Standard Certification from the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR) for the 20th consecutive year. This is the highest NAACCR standard for complete, accurate, and timely data to calculate standard incidence statistics for the year reviewed.
- ▶ Received American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer accreditation for all cancer programs at hospitals and cancer centers in the state from the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer.
- ▶ Completed 27 data requests for the Delaware Cancer Registry (DCR) since 2022, for projects including research on genetic susceptibility, which examined the influence of certain environmental and genetic factors on breast cancer risk. Data was used for both the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences Sister Study and Boston University.
- ▶ Published three articles in 2024 in the *Delaware Journal of Public Health*, regarding the DCR’s performance on 11 measures monitored by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer, including screening utilization, and whether improvements in racial disparities for colorectal cancer have been sustained.
- ▶ DCR data is now used by the Helen F. Graham Cancer Center & Research Institute at ChristianaCare to end racial disparities in triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC) hot spots in the Wilmington area.
- ▶ Collaborated with the Screening for Life program to identify geographical priority areas within the state to increase breast cancer screenings among Delaware’s uninsured and underinsured.
- ▶ Linking DCR data with nontraditional data from the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles, the Delaware Health Information Network, and the state’s Master Client Index continues to improve the quality of address and race/ethnicity data.

“TNBC is the most aggressive subtype of breast cancer and often presents at a younger age — and Delaware has the highest incidence of TNBC in the U.S. While it is not yet clear why we have more cases of TNBC, we are currently implementing several strategies to improve the early detection and prevention of breast cancer.”

Scott D. Siegel, PhD, MHCDS
Licensed Psychologist, Director of
Cancer Control & Population Sciences,
ChristianaCare Helen F. Graham Cancer
Center & Research Institute

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Chief of Surgery, Beebe Healthcare

Organizations Represented by the Delaware Cancer Consortium

Allied Diagnostic Pathology Consultants, PA

American Cancer Society

American Lung Association

American Society of Clinical Oncology

Bayhealth Medical Center

Beebe Hospital, Tunnell Cancer Center

Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware

ChristianaCare

Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition

Delaware Department of Health and Social
Services, Division of Public Health

Delaware Department of Natural
Resources and Environmental Control

Delaware Diamond Chapter of the
Oncological Nursing Society

Delaware Health and Social Services

Delaware House of Representatives

Delaware Prostate Cancer Coalition

Delaware Senate

Helen F. Graham Cancer Center &
Research Institute

Jewish Family Services/Cancer Care
Connection

La Red Health Center

Medical Society of Delaware

Nanticoke Health Services

Office of Governor Matt Meyer

Oncology Care Home Health Specialists

Quality Insights

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