

# 2019 NPCR WEST VIRGINIA SUCCESS STORY

## West Virginia Cancer Registry: Markie P. McCoy

### County Cancer Profiles: Local-Level Statistics at a Glance

# NATIONAL PROGRAM OF CANCER REGISTRIES SUCCESS STORY

**SUMMARY:** Due to the relatively low and rural population of West Virginia, it can be difficult for the average citizen to access pertinent county-level cancer statistics through conventional online resources. The West Virginia Cancer Registry (WVCR) addressed this problem by creating County Cancer Profiles. Each profile is dedicated to a county in West Virginia and contains cancer data that summarizes the cancer burden affecting that county. WVCR hopes these profiles can help to educate West Virginians about their county's cancer burden; develop cancer control, prevention, and treatment programs; and to detect growing cancer concerns on the local level.

**CHALLENGE:** Each year, the West Virginia Cancer Registry (WVCR), located within the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources' Bureau for Public Health, receives dozens of data requests and inquiries from a variety of sources including public health professionals, stakeholders, researchers, medical professionals and state residents. Some of these questions can be answered using free tools and resources available online, such as the WVCR's annual Cancer Burden Report or interactive cancer statistic websites provided by other government health groups. However, these resources may not be completely adequate due to the state's small and rural population. Data on the incidence rate of an uncommon cancer may not be available for a county with an especially low population and multiple resources may be required to answer a simple question. Due to this barrier, certain cancer concerns, like cancer clusters, can remain undetected. WVCR's challenge is to provide West Virginians with county-level cancer statistics that may not otherwise be obtainable through conventional methods.

**SOLUTION:** To address this challenge, WVCR evaluated cancer statistics available to the public and the format in which the statistics are presented. WVCR's resource of cancer statistics for the public is the annual West Virginia Cancer Burden report. This report presents cancer statistics by sex, race, year of diagnosis, and cancer site. WVCR also provides fact sheets for select cancer sites and types. Additionally, there are multiple websites

dedicated to cancer statistics for each state and territory in the United States. However, county-level statistics are usually unavailable for states with more rural, lower-populated counties. Creating individual profiles that summarize county-level statistics, presented in an organized and concise manner to serve a diverse audience, was the solution to this challenge for West Virginia.

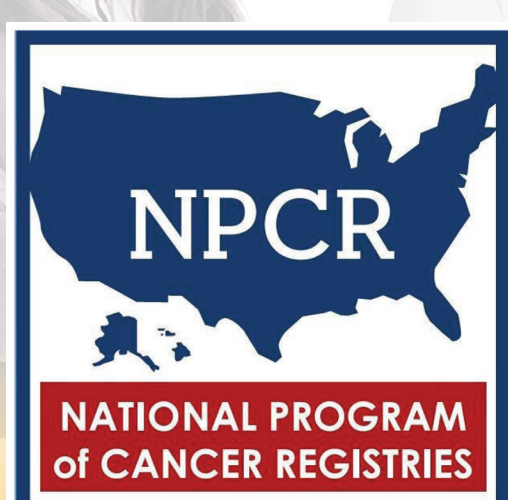
**RESULTS:** WVCR's County Cancer Profiles provide a snapshot of the current cancer landscape for each West Virginia county. Included in these profiles is data on cancer incidence and mortality, state and national comparisons, trends and late-stage cancer rates. Ultimately, the profiles are intended to spread awareness of the cancer burden affecting West Virginians; to help to develop cancer prevention, detection, and control programs; and to help public health professionals, stakeholders, and healthcare professionals keep abreast of the latest county-level cancer statistics.

**SUSTAINING SUCCESS:** WVCR County Cancer Profiles utilize data from the most recent five-year period (2012-2016), are one page (front and back), and provide basic county-level cancer statistics, such as cancer incidence trends by sex, the top ten diagnosed cancers, and late-stage cancer rates for cancers in which screenings are available. For the future, WVCR hopes to produce county-level profiles yearly along with the annual West Virginia Cancer Burden report. WVCR also aims to provide more in-depth county-level statistics, such as trends in cancer mortality and the top ten leading cancer mortality rates, and trends in late-stage cancer incidence rates. Finally, WVCR hopes to collaborate with state and county-level cancer prevention and control programs and other cancer-related groups to provide a comprehensive list of state and local-level resources that are available to anyone affected by cancer.

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