

2022 NPCR SOUTH CAROLINA SUCCESS STORY

South Carolina Central Cancer Registry; Sonya Younger, MBA, and Stephanie Chiodini, MSPH

Healthy Equity Project to Address Cancer Disparities in African American Men in South Carolina

National Program of Cancer Registries SUCCESS STORY

SUMMARY

A 2019 report *Cancer in African American Men in South Carolina* was developed by the South Carolina Central Cancer Registry (SCCCR), South Carolina Cancer Alliance, and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's Division of Cancer Prevention. This report aided in the creation of a Health Equity Project to address the burden of cancer in African American men in South Carolina. Overall, the Health Equity Project awarded six grants for community organizations to improve health equity in South Carolina and helped secure funding from the South Carolina General Assembly to finance future interventions to narrow the discrepancies seen in cancer incidence and mortality among African American men.

CHALLENGE

In response to the *Cancer in South Carolina: 20-year Trends for Incidence, Mortality, and Survival* report, the SC Central Cancer Registry, South Carolina Cancer Alliance, and Division of Cancer Prevention and Control developed the *Cancer in African American Men in South Carolina Report* in 2019 noting African American men experienced substantially higher rates of cancer incidence and mortality compared to other population groups. It was the first SC-based publication produced that focused on the factors contributing to these specific disparities.

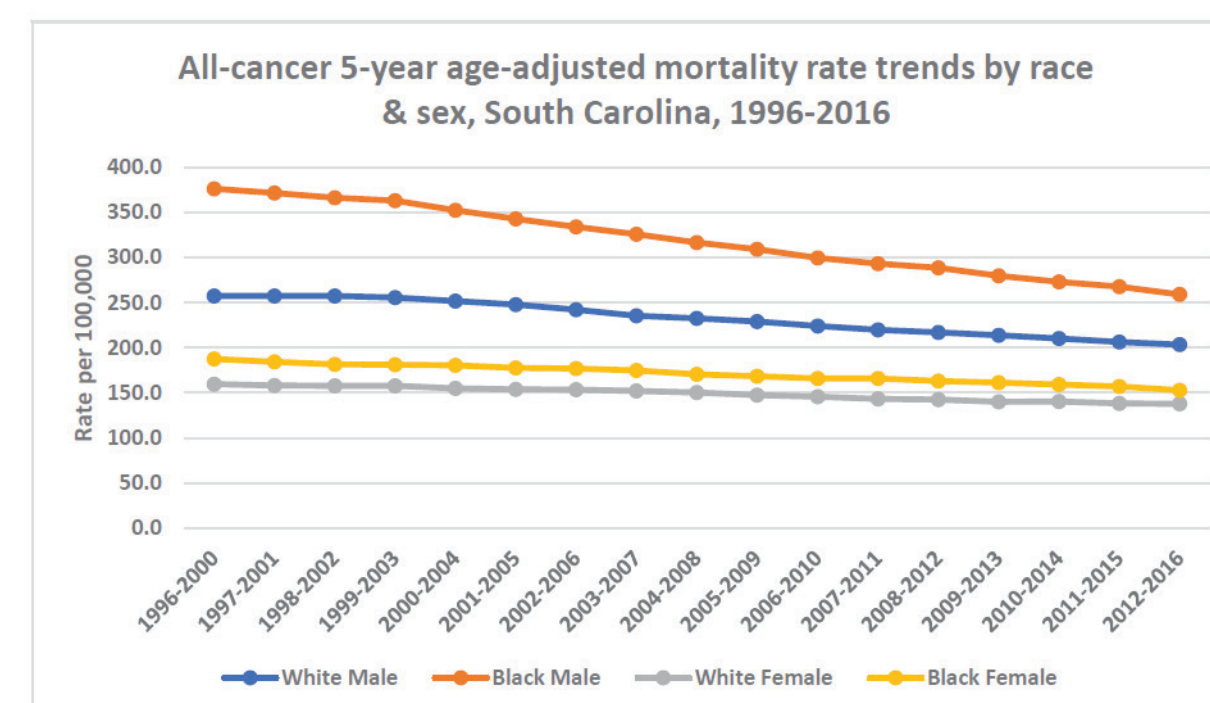
Overall, the report revealed favorable downward trends, but the data also revealed areas that require renewed efforts. These areas include slightly increased rates of lung cancer and breast cancer in females, the pronounced increase in rates of melanoma of the skin, and that the burden of cancer is highest among the state's African American men. Existing efforts included hosting annual African American Men

and Cancer actionable forums which invited decision-making partners to participate in developing and executing work plan goals and objective that their organizations could implement. Professional quality improvement coaches and speakers were invited to enhance motivation and outcomes for these efforts while the SC Cancer Alliance and Division of Cancer Prevention and Control offered continuous technical assistance and funding opportunities to help meet the goals.

Statewide in-person and virtual trainings were revamped for primary care offices which provided data from the SCCCR and evidence-based initiatives for how to prevent and detect lung, breast, and skin cancers. The data highlighted health disparities, including African American men, while suggesting health equity opportunities.

Figure 1 is a graph that originally appeared in the *Cancer in African American Men in South Carolina Report*.

FIGURE 1 MORTALITY RATES OF ALL CANCERS BY RACE AND SEX, 1996-2016



SOLUTION

The report addressed the health equity issue, supported the urgent need of addressing cancer disparities, and suggested that South Carolina statewide cancer prevention and control efforts focus on African American men. The report was structured to provide socioecological factors contributing to the fundamental causes of cancer in African American men; to provide data which showed cancer incidence, mortality, and survival disparities among African American men; and to provide evidence-based recommendations to address the disparities.

As a result of the *Cancer in African American Men in South Carolina Report*, the South Carolina Cancer Alliance created the Health Equity Project with the Centers for Disease Control cooperative agreement, CDC-RFA-DP17-1701, and private funding. The Project awarded six grants for community organizations to improve health equity in South Carolina. Applicants' goals and objectives were to align with those of the *20-Year Trends Report*, *Cancer in African American Men in South Carolina Report*, and *Healthy People 2030*.

RESULTS

Grant outcomes included over 80 patient and provider educational events, 55 educational training sessions for African American males, and three healthcare providers who established policies for African American males to help increase cancer screening referrals.

In addition to the Health Equity Project, the SC Cancer Alliance and the South Carolina Institute of Medicine and Public Health (SCIMPH) released a data brief highlighting the burden of cancer on African American men in June 2021. The SC Cancer Alliance utilized SCCCR data as well as recommendations outlined in the SCIMPH data brief to request funding from the South Carolina General Assembly. The recommendations to improve the cancer disparities seen among African American men

included improving access to screening services and early detection care by expanding safety net programs; providing community health workers customized resources to reinforce the need for ongoing screenings and early detection; and mobilizing communities to help increase cancer education and outreach efforts. Per the request, the SC General Assembly awarded the Alliance \$500,000 to incorporate the recommendations set forth by SCIMPH to improve the health disparities seen regarding African American men and cancer.

SUSTAINING SUCCESS

The SC Cancer Alliance plans to continue to coordinate local community-based screening events to ensure screening services are optimized as well as offer financial support to those in need so that structural barriers to cancer screenings are reduced. Additionally, the SCCCR will use data to determine designated areas to engage and mobilize community members to promote cancer prevention and early detection. Lastly, the SC Cancer Alliance would like to annually educate the community on the social determinants of health and the importance of addressing health disparities. The Alliance also plans to make sure that all efforts are evaluated annually to ensure optimized outcomes and accountability.

STORY QUOTE

"With the current efforts in place to address the burden of cancer in the target population," Henry Well, Executive Director of South Carolina Cancer Alliance, is confident that "the result of this work will drastically improve the lives of African American men in our state."

REGISTRY CONTACT INFORMATION

803-898-8000
South Carolina Central Cancer Registry Website



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention