

2019 NPCR VIRGIN ISLANDS SUCCESS STORY

Virgin Islands Cancer Registry: John Orr and Verónica Rivera-López, CTR

Prostate Cancer: Addressing Community Perception with Data

NATIONAL PROGRAM OF CANCER REGISTRIES SUCCESS STORY

SUMMARY: For years, it has been the perception of Virgin Islanders that “we have a lot of cancer cases.” With the Virgin Islands Central Cancer Registry (VICCR) fully operating and collecting data for cases diagnosed January 1, 2016 and forward, it is the first time in history that the US Virgin Islands has reliable cancer incidence data that can be used to inform the community about the incidence of cancer in the Virgin Islands. It is also the first time we can highlight more than the very high incidence of prostate cancer in the territory.

CHALLENGE: In the U.S. Virgin Islands, providers and residents alike have been decrying the high rate of prostate cancer in the territory for many years. Additionally, Virgin Islands residents seek diagnosis and treatment off-island (stateside) and anecdotal discussions with urologists in places that Virgin Islands residents traditionally seek treatment confirm this impression. With no central cancer registry in the Virgin Islands before 2016, confirming or refuting this assertion has been impossible. This is the first time data have been available to use for promoting change in the health system to address cancer-related issues.

SOLUTION: As a newly founded central cancer registry, the availability of 2016 data for analysis provides the foundation for efforts to reduce the burden of cancer in the territory. These data are just now being used in the development of plans to address cancer in the U.S. Virgin Islands. VICCR analyzed 2016 cancer registry data to determine whether our age-adjusted rate for prostate cancer is significantly higher than expected, as compared to U.S. age-adjusted rates.

RESULTS: In 2016, we had 476 new cancer cases. The top five primary sites were: Prostate (141), Breast (77), Colon (35), Hematopoietic (29) and Uterine (27) cancers. Having prostate cancer as the leading cancer by so large a margin over breast cancer was unexpected and seemed to be meaningful. The crude rate of 271.9 cases/100,000 males was high and warranted further examination. Age-adjusted rates were computed and compared to those found on the U.S. Cancer Statistics Data Visualizations Tool provided by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The 2016 age-adjusted incidence rate for prostate cancer in all males in the U.S. Virgin Islands is 224.1. This is more than twice

the rate for all males in the U.S. for the same year. As the population of the U.S. Virgin Islands is predominantly black, perhaps a more meaningful comparison would be to the age-adjusted incidence rate for prostate cancer in black males in the U.S. Unfortunately, mid-year census data is not available by race for the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Prostate Cancer Incidence, Age-Adjusted – 2016 – US Rates compared to US Virgin Islands

Location	Population	Age Adjusted Rate per 100,000 males
United States	All Males	101.4
United States	White Males	91.9
United States	Black Males	160.5
Virgin Islands	All Males	224.1

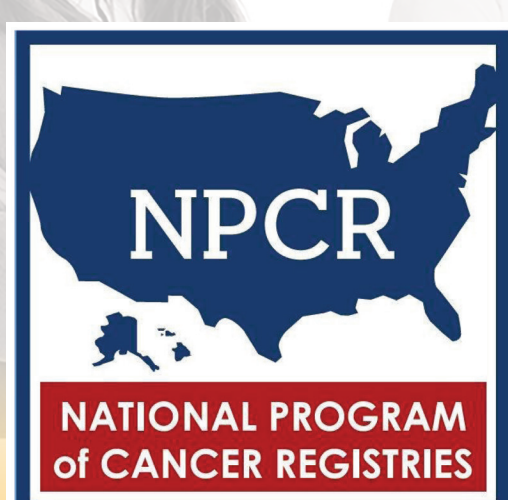
Source: U.S. Cancer Statistics Working Group. U.S. Cancer Statistics Data Visualizations Tool, based on November 2018 submission data (1999-2016): U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Cancer Institute; www.cdc.gov/cancer/dataviz, June 2019.

Source: Virgin Islands Central Cancer Registry

SUSTAINING SUCCESS: With an operational central cancer registry gathering incidence data, it is now possible to measure the burden of cancer in the territory. The continuous data collection of cancer incidence will help health care stakeholders address important issues like the need for early screening/detection strategies in the territory's population. Understanding the high incidence rate of prostate cancer in the territory has led to other activities such as the creation of media campaigns and media outreach, improvement of survival rates, and reduction of the incidence of late stage diagnoses. These data are also critical to the development of the U.S. Virgin Islands Comprehensive Strategic Health Plan and the Health Improvement Plan.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Telephone: 340-718-1131 ext. 3793



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion