

2019 NPCR WISCONSIN SUCCESS STORY

Wisconsin Cancer Registry: Angela Whirry-Achten and Mireille Perzan

Using data to address cancer inequities in Wisconsin

NATIONAL PROGRAM OF CANCER REGISTRIES SUCCESS STORY

SUMMARY: In an effort to reduce cancer disparities in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment in our state, the Wisconsin Cancer Reporting System (WCRS) has worked to expand the data available to its partners, including tribal programs, cancer control organizations, and researchers. To achieve this, WCRS collaborated with partners to increase online data availability. These collaborations facilitate the use of WCRS data to inform research and action aimed at reducing cancer inequities across the state of Wisconsin.

CHALLENGE: The overall cancer incidence rate reported by WCRS from 2012 to 2016 (the five most recent years for which data is available) is 464.6* per 100,000 population. However, minority populations in Wisconsin experience higher cancer burdens compared to Whites. The incidence rate among African Americans was 557.0 and among American Indian/Alaska Natives was 515.5, while the rate among Whites was 460.4 over this period. Different populations in Wisconsin face significant barriers to receiving cancer screening, diagnosis, and treatment. While WCRS collects data on race and ethnicity for all cancer cases, there are some limitations to these data. Particularly for the American Indian population, race misclassification and under-reporting likely lead to underestimates of cancer incidence. In Wisconsin, disparities in cancer mortality also exist. For example, in 2016 the breast cancer mortality rate for African American women (34.0) was nearly twice that of White women (16.7).

In addition, the reporting process necessitates a lag in the time from when a case is reported until data can be publicly released. WCRS seeks out a variety of channels through which to disseminate new data and update existing data available to the public. Timely and high-quality data is critical to inform many public health functions including monitoring, diagnosis, policy development, and research, such as studies that focus on reducing inequities and improving cancer incidence in Wisconsin. WCRS participates in ongoing and novel partnerships with other stakeholders and researchers, which are critical for advancing and understanding the needs of particular groups in the state.

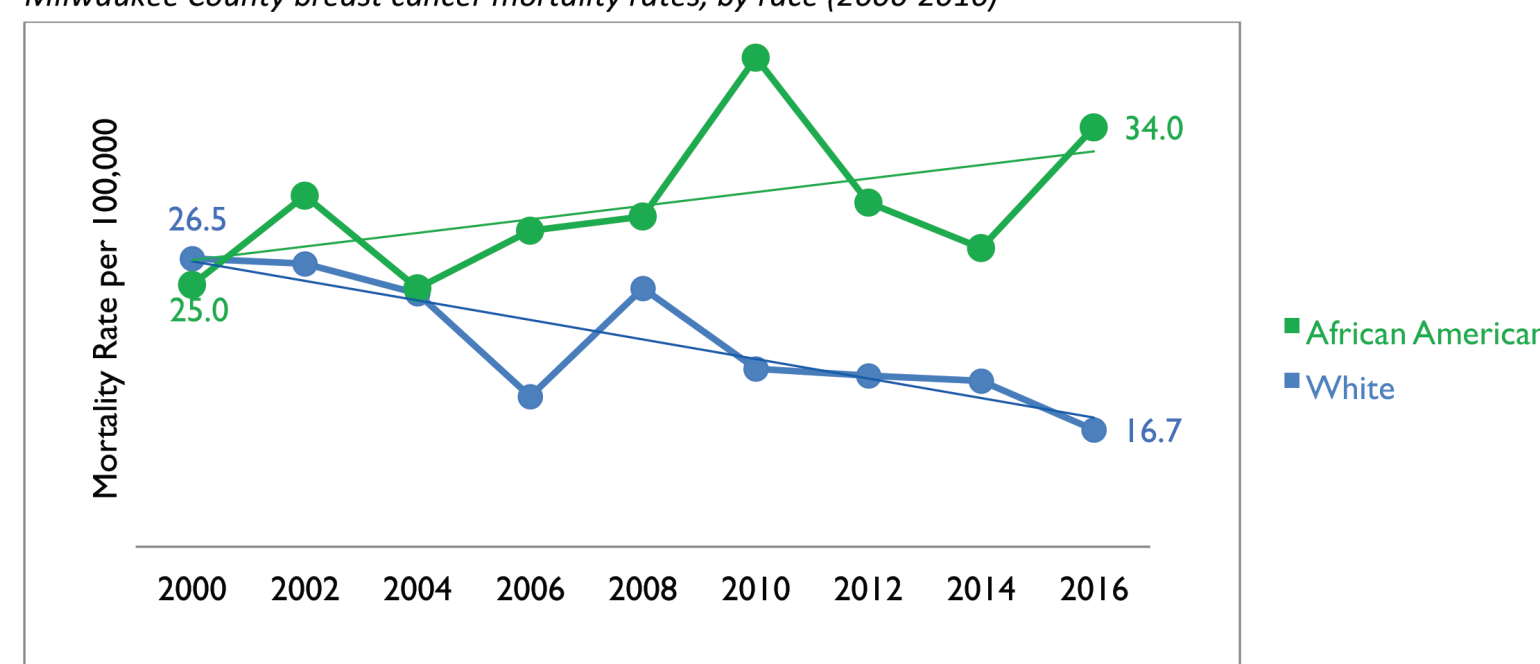
*All incidence rates are age-adjusted according to the 2000 US standard population.

SOLUTION: WCRS worked to ensure that 2016 cancer data were made available through a variety of online channels. Releasing new data was possible thanks to both internal efforts and external collaborations. The registry strengthened existing partnerships and participated in new collaborations with the intent of addressing inequities in cancer incidence and mortality. The ongoing partnership with the Wisconsin Well Woman Program (WWWP) utilized data to address inequities in breast cancer. WWWP has strong connections to communities in the state to which we want to communicate data. Conversations with community members and other stakeholders affected by cancer are important when planning preventive efforts and allocating resources. WCRS also maintained partnerships with the American Indian community, including the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Epidemiology Center (GLITEC) and the Red Cliff Community Health Center.

RESULTS: Publicly available Wisconsin cancer data was updated in a timely manner for multiple online channels. The Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health (WISH) query system allows users to access both cancer incidence and mortality data. WISH queries can be further specified to include race and ethnicity, age, sex, region, and county. This tool allows researchers or the public to specify a query according to their area(s) of interest. WISH was updated through internal collaborations at DPH. WCRS also collaborated with the Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Health (BEOH) to include 2016 data in their Environmental Public Health Tracking data portal, which will soon be live. This comprehensive and easy-to-use portal provides data down to the county level with an environmental health perspective. Updated WCRS data are also available for the public through cancer-rates.info and in the Wisconsin Annual Death Report. General inquiries on cancer were directed to the most appropriate web resource. Publications on the WCRS web page are well utilized; DHS web analytics reports showed over 2,500 unique views from the last 12 months, an increase of 13% from the prior year.

WCRS continued to work with WWWP on racial breast cancer inequities. WWWP is a crucial partner for disseminating information on racial disparities in cancer to the community, particularly as they facilitate critical discussions with their stakeholders, including those impacted by breast cancer. WCRS and WWWP data are linked annually to gain a more comprehensive picture on the relationship between screening and cancer diagnosis among women served by the WWWP. This partnership expanded to include collaborations on initiatives outside of data linkage. A breast cancer disparities stakeholder meeting was held in August 2019, in which WCRS staff participated. Discussion at the meeting was informed by data demonstrating inequities in breast cancer between African Americans and Whites. The table below outlines the increasing inequity between African American women's breast cancer mortality rates and White women's rates in Milwaukee County.

Figure 1.
Milwaukee County breast cancer mortality rates, by race (2000-2016)



These mortality data demonstrate the continued need for maintaining strong partnerships to address racial inequities through stakeholder collaboration.

To address inequities experienced by the American Indian populations, WCRS continued to link cancer case data to the Indian Health Service patient record registry. Additionally, data were provided to GLITEC for their tri-state cancer report, covering Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota. Mary Foote, WCRS' epidemiologist who retired in July 2019, collaborated with GLITEC epidemiologists and provided technical assistance for the report. WCRS also published updated tables in August 2019 with data on American Indian cases within Contract Health Service Delivery Area/Purchased Referred Care Delivery Area (CHSDA/PRCDA) counties on its website. Furthermore, WCRS provided a letter of support to the Red Cliff Community Health Center for a grant seeking to improve cancer reporting rates. The American Cancer Society awarded the grant to Red Cliff in September 2019. WCRS will provide technical assistance to support their case reporting efforts.

SUSTAINING SUCCESS: WCRS will continue to disseminate data for cancer partners across Wisconsin and the public. Continued data linkages will help monitor cancer trends and inform decisions on resource allocation for education, prevention, screening, and treatment efforts. Efforts to explore sub-county reporting are underway, with the goal of better identifying groups and areas in which to focus prevention resources. WCRS will continue to work with American Indian tribes and expects to complete a site visit to the Red Cliff Community Health Center in early 2020 to provide technical assistance to increase reporting rates. WCRS' commitment to long-term collaborations with statewide partners will help reduce the overall cancer burden and cancer inequities in the state.

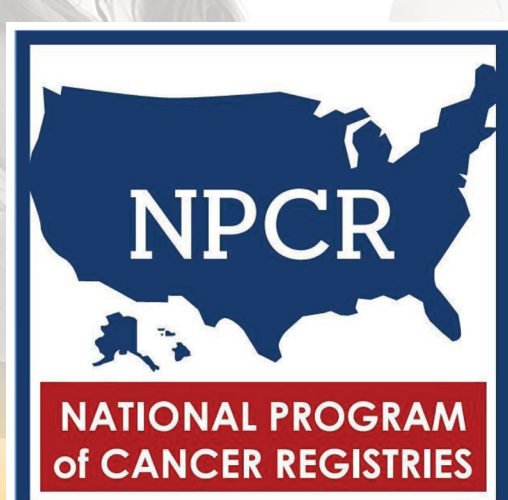
CONTACT INFORMATION:

Telephone: 608-266-6781

WCRS Website: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wcrs/data-pubs.htm>

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