

Rhode Island Cancer Registry Examines Early-Onset Colorectal Cancer Trends

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SUMMARY

The Rhode Island Cancer Registry (RICR) is a valuable resource to identify populations at risk for cancer, monitor cancer incidence trends, facilitate studies related to cancer prevention, evaluate cancer control initiatives, and develop educational awareness programs. RICR collects cancer data on patients who were newly diagnosed or received the first course of treatment in Rhode Island. All submitted cases are systematically reviewed, processed, and monitored. RICR uses data for epidemiologic review and analysis to monitor trends in cancer cases across the state, and for awareness when comparing with other state and national trends.

Given national trends and state-level interest, the RICR Program assessed early-onset colorectal cancer (EOCRC) in Rhode Island from 1996 to 2020.

CHALLENGES

- In the United States, EOCRC has risen about 2% annually since 1994¹
- Clinicians, policy makers, and community partners had interest in comparing the state trends with national averages on EOCRC, although colorectal cancer data were not available by clearly defined age groups.

SOLUTION

RICR created a plan to make state-level EOCRC rate data available to increase awareness and improve education. The cancer registry compiled results in a data brief that presents information in a clear and accessible format.

RESULTS

Using RICR data from diagnosis years 1996 to 2020, we calculated EOCRC annual incidence rates for adults younger than 50 (n=1,224), adults aged 50 to 64 (n=3,448), and adults aged 65 or older (n=10,054). We calculated 5-year age-adjusted incidence rates due to the scarcity of the data by individual years in our smaller state population.

We found that among Rhode Island residents, trends were distinct in age-adjusted incidence rates when comparing people who are younger than 50 to those 50 years old or older.

- The 5-year age-adjusted incidence rate of colorectal cancer among those younger than 50 remained between 6 and 7.7 cases per 100,000 people throughout 1996 to 2020.
- In contrast, the 5-year age-adjusted incidence rate among those aged 50 to 64 has decreased since 1996, hovering around 60 cases per 100,000 people from 2006 to 2020.
- Among those 65 or older, the 5-year age-adjusted incidence rate has also decreased from 370.9 cases per 100,000 people in 1996 to 2000 to 144.5 cases per 100,000 people in 2016 to 2020.
- Though we did not see an increase in EOCRC, all other age groups showed a decrease in colorectal cancer incidence trends.

Given our smaller sample based on the population in our state, we will collect more data over additional years to monitor these trends by age group and compare to national trends. We have made these data publicly available and received positive feedback from clinicians and partners in being able to access these data for awareness and education.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Our proposed next steps are to monitor these trends over time and update data yearly to follow Rhode Island trends in colorectal cancer overall, including EOCRC. Our success in increasing data availability and trend monitoring for colorectal cancer will be sustainable as it will be integrated into our current colorectal cancer trend monitoring work and will be followed annually.

Reference

1. Nfonsam V, Wusterbarth E, Vij P. Early-onset colorectal cancer. *Surg Oncol Clin N Am.* 2022;31(2):143-155.