

# South Carolina Childhood Cancer Taskforce Produces Inaugural Childhood Cancer Report

**AUTHORS:** Stephanie Chiodini, MSPH; Bezawit Kase, PhD; Anna Hoppman, MD, MPH

## SUMMARY

The South Carolina Department of Public Health's South Carolina Central Cancer Registry (SCCCR), the South Carolina Children's Hospital Collaborative, the University of South Carolina, and the South Carolina Cancer Alliance comprise the South Carolina Childhood Cancer Taskforce. The taskforce released the state's first childhood cancer report, *Childhood Cancer in South Carolina: 25-Year Trends in Incidence, Survival, and Mortality* in September 2024. This report provided an overview of the burden of childhood cancer in South Carolina (SC), focusing on disparities, trends, and potential areas for improvement. Released publicly following a press conference, the report has garnered the attention of oncologists, researchers, and advocates who can use this information to affect change in the field of pediatric cancers.

## CHALLENGES

- Pediatric cancers are rare (18.3 cases per 100,000 children in the U.S.!) but are often complex cases and have lifelong implications for patients.
- Although incidence in SC is lower than the U.S., the rate has increased in the past 25 years.<sup>2</sup>
- In SC, data relating to childhood cancer were not easily accessible publicly.

## SOLUTIONS

The taskforce collaborated on a project to provide the public with an in-depth review of the aggregate statistics available for childhood cancer over the past 25 years. This included analysis of incidence, mortality, and survival rates from 1996 to 2020 by race, sex, and rurality. The taskforce met regularly online and in person to review and analyze data and discuss results. The final product of this effort was released in September 2024 in the form of a publicly available report titled *Childhood Cancer in South Carolina: 25-Year Trends in Incidence, Survival, and Mortality*.

## RESULTS

The report was released during a press conference held at Prisma Health Children's Hospital-Midlands on September 4, 2024. The report identified many favorable trends for childhood cancer statewide, including an 11% improvement in childhood cancer survival and a 21% decrease in mortality over the reporting period. The report also identified priority areas to investigate, including racial and geographic disparities and how to care for SC's growing population of childhood cancer survivors. Survival among Black and Hispanic children with cancer remained lower than White children with cancer. Black children had the lowest survival of all groups. Childhood cancer was also persistently higher in urban areas compared with rates in rural areas.

## CONCLUSIONS

The report garnered significant media attention. The SCCCR has received several inquiries about data from external researchers and members of the taskforce. The South Carolina Cancer Alliance will facilitate round table discussions for the priority areas highlighted in the report in 2025. The report will be updated every 5 years, and reports may be published on special topics stemming from the discussions and requests for more data.

## REFERENCES

1. National Program of Cancer Registries and Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Results Program SEER\*Stat Database: NPCR and SEER Incidence - U.S. Cancer Statistics Public Use Research Database, 2023 Submission (2001-2021). United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Cancer Institute. Released June 2024. Accessed at [www.cdc.gov/units-states-cancer-statistics/public-use/](http://www.cdc.gov/units-states-cancer-statistics/public-use/).
1. SC Childhood Cancer Taskforce. *Childhood Cancer in South Carolina: 25-Year Trends in Incidence, Survival, and Mortality*. Released September 2024. Available at: [www.sccancer.org/media/1881/dl\\_8624-pediatric-report-this-version-to-print.pdf](http://www.sccancer.org/media/1881/dl_8624-pediatric-report-this-version-to-print.pdf)



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