

# 2021 NPCR MASSACHUSETTS SUCCESS STORY

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*Using Cancer Registry Data to Address Prostate Cancer Treatment Disparities in Massachusetts*

## National Program of Cancer Registries SUCCESS STORY

### SUMMARY

This success story describes the collaborative process in which the Massachusetts Comprehensive Cancer Prevention and Control Network (MCCPCN) worked with the Massachusetts Cancer Registry (MCR) and the Prostate Cancer Workgroup to conduct an in-depth analysis of MCR data. This resulted in a manuscript<sup>1</sup>, which discussed racial differences in the treatment and outcomes for prostate cancer in Massachusetts. Additionally, the MCCPCN conducted a qualitative study using key informant interviews (KIIs) to identify perceived barriers to prostate cancer treatment for Black non-Hispanic (NH) men. The MCCPCN and the Prostate Cancer Workgroup used quantitative and qualitative data from KIIs to guide the development of interventions aimed at ensuring equitable treatment for prostate cancer in Massachusetts.

### CHALLENGES

- Length of time for the manuscript to go through the internal peer review process and approval prior to submission.
- Delays in conducting key informant interviews due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Resignation of two prominent positions from the MCCPCN which affected project continuity.

### SOLUTION

- The MCCPCN and members of the Prostate Cancer Workgroup used MCR data to examine prostate cancer disparities between Black non-Hispanic and White non-Hispanic men.
- Based on the results of the in-depth data analysis, the Prostate Cancer Workgroup decided to conduct a qualitative study using key informant interviews (KIIs) to identify perceived barriers to prostate cancer treatment for Black non-Hispanic men.
- Members of the Prostate Cancer Workgroup were instrumental in helping identify key informants and providing contact lists for people to interview.
- The pandemic made it easier for members of the Prostate Cancer Workgroup to organize meetings as some oncologists were teleworking and not at hospitals.

### RESULTS

#### Quantitative Results

Black non-Hispanic men were significantly less likely to receive treatment for prostate cancer than White non-Hispanic men. Men with public insurance experienced lower odds of definitive therapy compared to men with private insurance. Despite the lower odds of definitive therapy, Black non-Hispanic men in Massachusetts had a 17% lower cancer-specific mortality hazard ratio compared to White non-Hispanic men.

#### Qualitative Results

- There is a growing awareness that disparities in prostate cancer treatment exists.
- Factors that affect prostate cancer treatment include access to care, health literacy, socio-economic status and financial concerns.
- Prostate cancer treatment decision-making is affected by factors such as medical and research mistrust, tolerance of side effects, shared decision-making, family support, and severity of disease.
- Disparities in prostate cancer treatment can be addressed through patient education, decision tools, improved communication, and the use of community health workers and patient navigators.

### SUSTAINING SUCCESS

The MCR continues to collaborate with its partners on several projects including publication of the study results and collaboration with the Prostate Cancer Workgroup on a grant to address prostate cancer treatment disparities in Massachusetts by working with selected hospitals.

### REGISTRY CONTACT INFORMATION

617-624-5662

<https://www.mass.gov/massachusetts-cancer-registry>



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

### SOURCE

<sup>1</sup> Racial differences in the treatment and outcomes for prostate cancer in Massachusetts. Available at: <https://acsjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/cncr.33564>