American Cancer Society National Consortium Announce Recommendations to Increase Cancer Screening Rates to Pre-Pandemic Levels

ATLANTA, Feb. 16, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- Today, the American Cancer Society's National Consortium for Cancer Screening and Care (ACS National Consortium) announced nine consensus recommendations to accelerate recovery from the pandemic and improve the nation's ability to provide quality cancer screening and care for all.

The ACS National Consortium convenes leading organizations dedicated to the safe and equitable recovery of cancer screening and treatment services. The group committed to work together throughout 2021 and those joint efforts have culminated into the new report, *Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Improving Cancer Screening and Care in the U.S*.

"On February 2, President Biden reignited the nation's Cancer Moonshot Initiative, calling for an all-hands-on-deck approach to end cancer as we know it," said Dr. Arif Kamal, M.D., Chief Patient Officer of the American Cancer Society. "The development of these recommendations demonstrates that sense of shared responsibility and showcases the cancer-fighting community at its finest - collaborative, undaunted, and relentless in our pursuit of improved and equitable outcomes for all."

The nine consensus recommendations include:

1. **National Partnerships**: Accelerate the collective action of partnerships, coalitions, and roundtables to influence the adoption of evidence-based cancer screening interventions and policies.
2. **Coordinated Messaging**: Accelerate a coordinated, innovative campaign to promote cancer screening as a public health priority.
3. **Proven Programs:** Accelerate screening efforts by supporting and expanding proven programs that effectively reach communities that are historically excluded and underserved.
4. **Quality Measures:** Accelerate the adoption of improved quality measures, accountability measures, and institutional goal-setting that prioritize equitable outcomes.
5. **Pandemic-Related Innovations**: Accelerate innovations and interventions that better expand equitable access to cancer screening and care.
6. **Public Trust**: Strengthen the trust in public health and health care systems by using a forward-looking, whole-person approach
7. **Comprehensive Preparedness Plans:** Strengthen health system and community preparedness plans for health disruptions by including cancer and other chronic disease care in the plans
8. **Transdisciplinary Teamwork:** Strengthen transdisciplinary teamwork in support of health care delivery.
9. **Document and Understand Cancer Disparities:** Strengthen the understanding of outcomes in cancer screening and care by collecting and utilizing demographic and social determinants of health data.

The timing of the release of the report is significant. Now, two years into the pandemic, cancer screening rates still fall below historical baselines, and catching up on missed cancer screenings is an incredible challenge.

"Cancer screening is an essential public health priority, but not everyone is benefitting equally," said Dr. Laura Makaroff, Senior Vice-President, Prevention and Early Detection for the American Cancer Society. "Disruptions in cancer services due to the pandemic are more significantly affecting communities with a disproportionate cancer burden, and the urgency to address our nation's cancer burden and unequal outcomes is undeniable."

The ACS National Consortium is committed to taking action and advancing key recommendations in 2022, while also aligning with the President's Cancer Panel's latest report, *Closing the Gaps in Cancer Screening: Connecting People, Communities, and Systems to Improve Equity and Access*. Immediate activities will aim to activate national and local organizations to implementation consensus recommendations.

SOURCE American Cancer Society

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