

American Cancer Society Partners with Clinics and Health Systems To Improve Cancer Prevention and Screening in 39 States

ATLANTA, MAY 31, 2023 – The [American Cancer Society](#) has announced the launch of 160 projects focused on improving breast, colorectal, cervical and lung cancer screening rates or HPV vaccination rates in targeted communities. In partnership with local health systems, the projects will drive quality improvement strategies and evidence-based interventions to promote and deliver cancer screening and HPV vaccination dissemination appropriately, safely, and equitably. Collectively, the 2023 projects in 39 states impact nearly 1.7 million people eligible for cancer screening or HPV vaccination. The map of projects and health systems can be found [here](#).

Cancer can impact anyone at any age, but finding cancer early increases survival rates. Despite this evidence, too many individuals for whom cancer screening is recommended remain unscreened due to barriers beyond their control. Due to a [significant decrease in screening rates](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Cancer Society launched the comprehensive and multi-sector “Get Screened” initiative in February 2021 to dramatically increase screening rates through local and regional engagement. Part of the approach includes supporting health systems in providing screenings to communities with historically low screening rates. In the first year of the program, 88% of health systems increased cancer screening rates in at least one screening area, 135,000 additional people were screened and 4,300 breast, cervical and colorectal cancers were diagnosed. In 2022, 345,600 breast, cervical, colorectal, and lung cancer screenings were completed, and 6,600 cancers were diagnosed.

Almost 35,000 people are diagnosed with HPV-caused cancer each year. HPV vaccination can prevent more than 90 percent of these cancers when given at the recommended ages. The HPV vaccine currently used in the US (Gardasil®9) was FDA-approved in 2014 and protects against nine HPV types. The American Cancer Society is focused on improving adolescent (ages 9-12) HPV vaccination rates through engaging health systems, payors, federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), state health departments and other state-based partners. In 2022, the 52 health systems participating in this partnership reported average HPV initiation and completion rates increased for the overall (ages 9-13) 2022 health system cohort by 3.1% and 0.6% points, respectively.

“Our partnerships with clinics and health systems are critical in addressing low cancer screening rates and HPV vaccination in communities,” said [Dr. Arif Kamal](#), chief patient officer of the American Cancer Society. “Some of the barriers we see can be addressed on a community level if health professionals have the support to improve internal processes and provide resources.”

According to the American Cancer Society’s recently released [Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Facts & Figures, 2023-2024](#), barriers to cancer screening are not mutually exclusive and occur and interact at multiple levels, including policy, health system, provider, community, and patient levels. Access can be improved by reducing administrative barriers and costs; offering alternative and flexible screening sites and hours; and providing childcare, transportation, and translation services. Health system-wide reminders, feedback, and incentives can improve providers’ recommendations, and small media and educational campaigns can improve patient demand for screening.

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About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society is a leading cancer-fighting organization with a vision to end cancer as we know it, for everyone. For more than 100 years, we have been improving the lives of people with cancer and their families as the only organization combating cancer through advocacy, research, and patient support. We are committed to ensuring everyone has an opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer. To learn more, visit [cancer.org](#) or call our 24/7 helpline at 1-800-227-2345. Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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