The American Cancer Society and Color Health Announce Partnership Aimed at Increasing Access and Adherence to Cancer Screening and Prevention for U.S. Employers and Unions

Early cancer detection is key to improving survival rates and reducing costs of treating cancer.

CHICAGO - June 5, 2023 – The American Cancer Society (ACS) and Color Health today announced a partnership that will provide convenient, accessible, and comprehensive cancer prevention and screening solutions for the highest-burden cancers including breast, prostate, lung, cervical, and colorectal for more than 150 million Americans who receive health care through either their employer or union.[1]

Regular cancer screening increases the chances of detecting certain cancers early before cancer has a chance to spread. Yet screenings for the most common cancers remain underutilized with little to no progress over the past decade. According to a study conducted by the American Cancer Society, the COVID-19 pandemic further reduced breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screenings by millions in 2020.[2] And while many employers and unions provide health insurance that typically covers cancer screening, barriers in accessing these often life-saving services will contribute to a projected 1.9 million new cancer cases and more than 600,000 lives lost in 2023, alone.[3]

Even Americans with health insurance find accessing cancer preventive services challenging. Among cancer survivors and patients, for whom ongoing screenings are critical, the impact of coverage changes would affect their screening rates and increase mortality risk, according to a large national study led by the American Cancer Society.

Together, ACS and Color Health are introducing a **Cancer Prevention and Screening Program** that combines ACS's expertise in clinical, evidence-based research on cancer prevention and Color Health's leadership in health care delivery to help employers and unions improve cancer outcomes and reduce costs for their employees and members. This cancer prevention and screening program enables employers and funds to provide:

- Highly accessible screening options, including at-home screening
- Connection to clinical services
- High-touch care advocacy
- Resources for further education

"Ending cancer as we know it, for everyone, requires collaboration, cooperation, and integrated work plans that address the entire cancer continuum—from prevention and detection, to treatment and survivorship," said Dr. Karen E. Knudsen, CEO for the American Cancer Society and American Cancer Society Action Network. "The core of our partnership with Color Health is about saving lives and ultimately fulfilling our vision to end cancer as we know it, for everyone. Rates of cancer screening, stage of detection, and treatment outcomes reflect some of the deepest disparities in American healthcare. Together, with Color Health, we are on a mission to clear barriers that impede access to timely and quality preventative care, especially among medically underserved communities who are less likely to be diagnosed early or receive equitable cancer care."

"Through all of Color's work, we have learned that the best way to make healthcare accessible is to incorporate it into people's everyday lives. Employers and unions are critical to American healthcare because they bring healthcare coverage to nearly half of the country," said Othman Laraki, CEO, Color Health. "As is the case with many other aspects of healthcare, treating late-stage cancer is both less effective and dramatically more expensive. Working with employers and unions to bring their populations up to ACS screening and prevention guidelines is one of the largest human and financial opportunities to improve health care in America."

As part of the program, employers and unions will also receive data that provides an aggregate view of their employee and member screening rates toward the goal of informing employers about the success of wellness and education programs. The new partnership also strongly aligns with the work ACS and Color Health are already doing in support of the White House Cancer Moonshot initiative that aims to reduce the death rate from cancer by at least 50% over the next 25 years.

"The Cancer Moonshot's mission is to end cancer as we know it by cutting the death rate from cancer by at least 50% over the next 25 years and improve the experience of people and their families living with and surviving cancer," said Dr. Danielle Carnival, Deputy Assistant to the President for the Cancer Moonshot. "To achieve these goals, the President and First Lady have called on everyone, including the private sector, to work to ensure that all Americans can equitably access and utilize all available cancer screening and early detection tools."

"Cancer touches all of us personally and represents some of the toughest moments for our Salesforce family. As employers — the source of health insurance for almost half of Americans — we have a responsibility to ensure that preventive health care is available and accessible," said Marc Benioff, Chair and CEO, Salesforce. "The American Cancer Society and Color Health Cancer Prevention and Screening Program will help save lives by enabling employers to provide more screening options and educational resources for employees and their families."

"Offering wrap-around benefits for cancer screening and prevention will make a significant difference in the ways we can empower our employees to take swift and proactive steps to maintain their good health," said Maria Scheeler, Administrator and Executive Director of Teamsters Health & Welfare Fund and Pension Funds of Philadelphia and Vicinity. "We are very proud to join the national movement to reduce the incidence of cancer and help save more lives."

As part of the partnership, a portion of Color Health proceeds will help support the ACS Hope Lodge® communities around the country that offer cancer patients and their families a free and safe place to stay when treatment is far away from home. "Every year, our 30+ Hope Lodge® communities provide families approximately 500,000 nights of free lodging tailored to the specific needs of cancer patients," said Dr. Knudsen. "It's just one of the myriad of ways ACS has been improving the lives of cancer patients and their families for 110 years. This partnership with Color Health will accelerate our mission to improve lives and increase the pace of progress against cancer."

Detailed Program Overview:

The ACS, Color Health Cancer Prevention & Screening Program aims to bring employer and union workforce populations up to ACS screening guidelines by:

- Providing employers with visibility into cancer screening data to identify and address gaps in access within their population.
- Ensuring employees and members are aware of their primary cancer risk factors and ACS-specific screening and prevention recommendations for their demographic.
- Delivering cancer screenings directly to employees and members at home and helping them navigate coordination with their health care provider(s).
- Offering education, care coordination, and support for those not in compliance with guidelines, and those at risk or diagnosed with cancer, through care teams, including clinicians, care advocates, health coaches, genetic counselors, and mental health support groups.

Key Statistics

- Nearly 40% of Americans will develop cancer at some point in their lifetime, with one in two men and one in three women receiving a cancer diagnosis.[4],[11]
- Cancer is the second leading cause of death, after heart disease, in the United States. In 2020, 602,350 Americans died of cancer-related causes.[5]
- For most major cancers, an early diagnosis significantly impacts survival rates (20-30%) and reduces costs compared to late-stage cancer diagnosis.[6]
- Over 250,000 people in the U.S. are expected to die from the most common cancers every year, [5] yet a significant portion of Americans are behind on screenings, even among commercially insured populations. [6,7]
- About 49% of the country's population, roughly 156 million Americans, receive health insurance coverage from their employer.[7]
- Cancer is the top health care cost driver for employers as of 2022.[8]
- In recent years, the cost of cancer care for the most prevalent cancer types was estimated to be approximately $156.2 billion for privately insured adults younger than 65 years in the U.S.[9]

For more information, visit color.com/cancer.

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About Color Health

Color is a complete platform for healthcare delivery, providing the technology, infrastructure, and logistics required to distribute large-scale health initiatives to diverse populations. Color works with employers, unions, government agencies, schools, and communities to provide equitable, accessible healthcare services. Color supports access for traditional and distributed workforces, as well as underserved communities, by removing barriers to care. Our model enables screening, counseling, and life-saving treatments to be utilized by more people, wherever they are. Connect with Color on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and www.color.com.

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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[1] https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/total-population/?dataView=1&currentTimeframe=0&selectedDistributions=employer&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D

[2] https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2792956

[3] https://acsjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.3322/caac.21763

[4] https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/understanding/statistics#:~:text=Approximately%2039.5%25%20of%20men%20and%20women%20will%20be%20diagnosed%20with%20cancer%20at%20some%20point%20du

[5] https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/research/update-on-cancer-deaths/index.htm

[6] https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/uscs/about/data-briefs/no25-incidence-relative-survival-stage-diagnosis.htm

[7] https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/total-population/?dataView=1&currentTimeframe=0&selectedDistributions=employer&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D

[8] https://www.businessgrouphealth.org/newsroom/news-and-press-releases/press-releases/2023-lehcspds

[9] https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2784771

[11] https://www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/understanding-cancer-risk/lifetime-probability-of-developing-or-dying-from-cancer.html

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