

American Cancer Society and ACS CAN Statement on Newly Named National Cancer Institute Director

Washington, D.C. – Nov. 17, 2023 -- W. Kimryn Rathmell, MD, PhD, MMHC, will serve as the National Cancer Institute (NCI)'s new director. This role is critical to ensuring ongoing innovation in oncology.

“Dr. Rathmell is an exceptional physician scientist, and I had the pleasure of serving with her on the NCI Board of Scientific Advisors. She is a voice of wisdom on how to align scientific priorities to solve for the most pressing challenges in cancer prevention, detection, and cure,” said [Dr. Karen E. Knudsen](#), CEO of the [American Cancer Society](#) and [American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network](#) (ACS CAN). “Dr. Rathmell has lived experiences as a highly impactful translational scientist and cancer center leader, which will serve as a strong foundation for the NCI and the whole of government approach toward ending cancer as we know it. NCI is fundamental to our nation’s research foundation, having ignited lifesaving advancements for those touched by cancer and solidified our country’s status as an international leader in research.”

Dr. Rathmell is the Hugh Jackson Morgan Professor and Chair of Medicine at Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC), and Physician-in-Chief for Vanderbilt University Adult Hospital and Clinics. A physician-scientist, Rathmell’s work focuses on the treatment and research of complex renal cell carcinomas. Her research has resulted in over 20 years of funding from the National Institutes of Health, and more than 200 articles in leading peer-reviewed journals.

Prior to her position at Vanderbilt, Dr. Rathmell, co-directed the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Graduate Training Program in Translational Medicine at University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (UNC), and was Associate Director for Training and Education at UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, and Associate Director and Alexander Family Chair in Translational Research for the Medical Scientist Training Program. She has held leadership positions for the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the Kidney Cancer Research Foundation, and the American Society for Clinical Investigation and was elected to the National Academy of Medicine.

“We commend President Biden for this outstanding choice and look forward to working with Dr. Rathmell toward our shared goals. ACS and ACS CAN value our relationship and partnership with the NCI in aligning priorities around research that is intended to improve the lives of cancer patients and their families,” Dr. Knudsen said. “ACS and ACS CAN look forward to working with Dr. Rathmell to continue the essential research necessary to ensure everyone has a fair and just opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer.”

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](https://www.cancer.org) or call our 24/7 helpline at [1-800-227-2345](tel:1-800-227-2345). Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

About ACS CAN

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) advocates for evidence-based public policies to reduce the cancer burden for everyone. We engage our volunteers across the country to make their voices heard by policymakers at every level of government. We believe everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer. Since 2001, as the American Cancer Society’s nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate, ACS CAN has successfully advocated for billions of dollars in cancer research funding, expanded access to quality affordable health care, and advanced proven tobacco control measures. We stand with our volunteers, working to make cancer a top priority for policymakers in cities, states and our nation’s capital. Join the fight by visiting www.fightcancer.org.

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