

Dr. Wayne Frederick Appointed Interim CEO of the American Cancer Society and ACS CAN

ATLANTA, October 15, 2024 — The Board of Directors at the [American Cancer Society](#) (ACS) announced today the appointment of [Wayne A. I. Frederick](#), MD, MBA, as interim chief executive officer of ACS and its advocacy affiliate, the [American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network](#) (ACS CAN), effective **November 2**. Dr. Frederick, a distinguished health care leader and surgical oncologist, brings a wealth of experience in business administration, medical education, academic excellence and public health to the organization as it continues its mission to improve the lives of people with cancer and their families through advocacy, research, and patient support.

“Dr. Frederick’s commitment to improving health care outcomes, particularly as it relates to patient care and research, aligns perfectly with the American Cancer Society’s mission,” said Brian Marlow, chair of the ACS Board of Directors. “As a proven and collaborative leader, we are confident in his ability to maintain and build upon the incredible momentum across ACS during this period of leadership transition.”

Dr. Frederick is currently president emeritus of Howard University, having served as the institution's 17th president from 2014 to 2023. Under his leadership, Howard University made significant strides in student opportunity, academic innovation, public service and fiscal stability. His tenure accompanied a period of considerable growth and transformation at Howard, including historic enrollment numbers and philanthropic donations.

“I am deeply honored to join ACS and ACS CAN in this capacity as interim CEO and continue our work to end cancer as we know it, for everyone,” said Dr. Frederick. “I look forward to working full-time with the incredible teams at ACS and ACS CAN, and more than a million volunteers across the country, to advance our shared goals of increasing access to care, reducing cancer disparities and improving the lives of patients and their families.”

A practicing surgeon, Dr. Frederick was recently appointed by the Howard University Board of Trustees as the distinguished Charles R. Drew Professor of Surgery at the prestigious Howard University College of Medicine. His academic career began as the associate director of the cancer center at the University of Connecticut. An accomplished scholar, Dr. Frederick has authored numerous peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, abstracts and editorials, and is a widely recognized expert in the fields of health care disparities and medical education. His medical research focuses on reducing racial, ethnic and gender disparities in cancer care outcomes, with a particular emphasis on gastrointestinal cancers.


Dr. Frederick, who joined the ACS Board in 2022, has stepped down from his position on the Board as part of this new interim leadership role. Karen E. Knudsen, MBA, PhD, who previously announced her desire to transition from CEO of ACS and ACS CAN after more than three extraordinary years, will remain part of ACS and serve as an Executive Strategic Advisor until early 2025 to support the transition. Her final day as CEO will be **November 1**. The Board’s search for a permanent CEO remains ongoing.

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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 110 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](#), [X](#), and [Instagram](#).

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