

Addressing Disparities in Cancer Across the Country



The American Cancer Society and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) have an ambitious goal to achieve a 40% reduction in cancer mortality in the United States by 2035. If we are to achieve that goal, we must fight to achieve health equity, the just and fair opportunity for everyone to prevent, find, treat and survive cancer – regardless of how much money they make, the color of their skin, their sexual orientation, their gender identity, their disability status, or where they live.

The 5-year relative survival rate is lower among Blacks than whites for every stage of diagnosis in the four most common cancer sites.

The cancer death rate is 20% higher for individuals from the poorest US counties compared to wealthy counties.

People who are uninsured are more likely to be diagnosed with cancer at a later stage when survival is less likely and treatment is more costly.

To achieve health equity, ACS CAN is fighting for passage of laws and policies at the national, state and local levels. Here is a brief snapshot of our work.

FEDERAL

Advocating to preserve and expand Affordable Care Act provisions that aid lower income individuals

Advocating for increased federal funding for cancer screening programs that serve low-income, uninsured and underinsured individuals

Pursuing passage of the Henrietta Lacks Enhancing Cancer Research Act to ensure clinical trials enroll diverse populations

STATE & LOCAL



Advocating for policies that **ensure access to quality, affordable and comprehensive health insurance** including efforts to curb the availability of inadequate health plans and protect and enhance Medicaid eligibility



Advocating for **smoking cessation** treatment that is **comprehensive, barrier-free**, and **widely promoted** for Medicaid enrollees; addressing systemic racism in the enforcement of tobacco control laws by advocating it be entrusted to public health officials or other non-police officers



Advocating for increased funding for state programs that provide **free cancer screenings** to low-income, uninsured and underinsured individuals



Advocating for increased **investment in state cancer research** to better understand health disparities as well as ensure diverse participation in clinical trials

Learn more about our advocacy work at the federal, state and local levels to eliminate disparities and improve cancer-related outcomes for all individuals at fightcancer.org/healthdisparities.