

WHAT DRIVES CANCER IN IOWA?

A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT WITH IOWA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
AND THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Cancer rates in Iowa have been **rising since 2013**. In response, Governor Reynolds and the legislature passed Senate File 647 which creates a team of scientists to examine the factors behind the rise in cancer rates in Iowa.

Goal: Understand what is contributing to Iowa's High Cancer Rates

Cancer is like a puzzle—many different factors or “pieces” link together to cause it. These pieces include: **behavioral** (like smoking or drinking), **environmental** (like radon or arsenic exposure) and **genetic** (inherited traits) factors. **By studying these factors, we hope to find out what is driving cancer in Iowa and how to reduce the rate of new cancers.**

Why This Matters

Understanding the factors that contribute to the high rate of cancer in Iowa will help us to create better public health **policies**, develop targeted **prevention** programs, and **reduce** the number of people affected by cancer.

What the Project Will Do

• Map Cancer Rates

Maps will be created to show where the six most common types of cancer occur in Iowa. Then, using the specific data, adjustments will be made for these known risk factors to show the areas that still have higher cancer rates than expected.

• Study Prostate Cancer Screening

Prostate cancer rates vary across Iowa, which could be a result of healthcare providers following different prostate cancer screening guidelines. Screening behavior will be analyzed to determine if it contributes to Iowa's prostate cancer rates.

• Review What Works in Other States

Reviewing programs in similar states, with similar risk factors may provide a better understanding of program and policy ideas that could work in Iowa.

• Strengthen Cancer Prevention

Through undertaking this work, critical data gaps that hinder effective cancer prevention today will be identified. As information continues to be collected and analyzed over time, key questions will be more effectively answered, enabling evidence-based decisions to be made which will address Iowa's elevated cancer rates both now and in the future.

KEY FACTS ABOUT CANCER IN IOWA

- More than 1 in 20 Iowans have experienced a diagnosis of cancer
- Iowa has the 2nd highest rate of new cancer cases in the United States
- Prostate, breast and melanoma cancer rates are rising
- Iowa has one of the fastest rising rates of melanoma in the U.S.
- Iowa has the highest rate of oropharyngeal cancer (linked to HPV) in the U.S.
- Lung cancer is declining, but more slowly than in other states
- Colorectal cancer rates are also declining, but remain higher than most other states

For more information contact the College of Public

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