

# Healthier Nation Fact Sheet

## Cancer Prevention and Survivorship

### Labor Unions

#### Vision for a Vibrant Economy:

*All businesses and employers will be equipped with opportunities to provide a high level of services that protect, promote and preserve optimal health of their workforce regardless of industry type, business size or geography.*

#EndCancerSilence

#EndCancerAsWeKnowIt

Comprehensive efforts to promote worker wellbeing (including employee health related to chronic diseases prevention and management) and reduce worker safety risks can have notable effects on costs. Approaches that improve workplace policies, programs, and practices can lead to better retention rates and improved productivity.<sup>1</sup> **National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)-Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

With improvements in diagnosis, treatment and survival rates, the impact of cancer on paid work is of increasing importance.<sup>2</sup> **Occupational Medicine**

According to the American Cancer Society's most recent statistics, approximately 5,250 Americans are diagnosed with cancer (new cases) and approximately 1,670 Americans lose their lives to cancer each day.<sup>3</sup> **American Cancer Society (ACS)**

Some of the country's leading causes of mortality (death) such as: heart disease, stroke and lung cancer are caused by or made worse by exposure secondhand smoke in adults.<sup>4</sup> **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

Employers do care about their employees but may possess limited resources to address or sustain optimal employee health. However, every day is an opportunity to fundamentally change the trajectory of cancer in every region, state, county, parish, and community. Cancer transcends regional belts: Rust Belt, Wheat Belt, Sun Belt, Corn Belt, Stroke Belt, Rice Belt, Jell-O Belt, and Frost Belt as well as income. **SelfMade Health Network (SMHN)**

Work is important for an individual's identity and provides a social connection; it also presents a distraction and enables the cancer survivor to regain a sense of normality and control. Returning to or maintaining employment after cancer is important for a person's quality of life.<sup>5</sup> **Current Oncology Journal**



The leading causes of death among adults are heart disease, cancer, COVID-19, chronic lower respiratory disease (including COPD-chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), stroke and unintentional injury, and diabetes.<sup>6</sup>



## Medical Conditions in the Nation

Regardless of industry type, business size or geographic location, employers and employees may be living with or impacted by health conditions. Approximately one in three American adults have multiple chronic conditions (MCCs), which are medical conditions that last one year or more and require

ongoing medical attention.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the number of adult cancer survivors with multiple chronic conditions (MCC) or comorbidities has increased in the past 2 decades, especially among cancer survivors aged 18-44 years of age.<sup>8</sup> And as noted in the 2022 Cancer Moonshot report, “the avoidable burden

of cancer imposes a heavy physical, emotional, and economic toll on individuals, families, and communities around the country. It also has broader economic implications, reducing workforce productivity and adding unnecessary strain to the healthcare system.”<sup>9</sup>

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## What is Cancer Survivorship?

And upon comparison of cancer incidence (onset) by gender, prostate, lung, and colorectal cancers account for approximately 43% of all cancers diagnosed in men. And the 3 most common cancers among women are

breast, lung, and colorectal, and they account for an estimated 50% of all new cancer diagnoses.<sup>10</sup>

Cancer survivorship includes living beyond cancer diagnosis and treatment. Cancer survivorship

begins at diagnosis and includes populations who continue receive treatment over the long term, to either reduce the risk of recurrence or to manage chronic disease.<sup>11</sup>

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## Cancer Prevention and Survivorship Are Good for the Economy, Employers, and Employees in All States

The onset of certain cancers can affect an organization or industry’s most dependable employees or workers. Previous studies have demonstrated that cancer screening rates vary by industry, occupational status and are dependent upon several factors (including health insurance coverage).<sup>12</sup> In some instances, cancer screening rates are also impacted by events such as: pandemics, natural disasters, or other unanticipated environmental factors. Key findings from the 2022 American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) report revealed that nearly 10 million Americans missed their cancer screenings during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>13</sup>

Early screening, diagnosis and treatment of lung, prostate, colorectal cancers (most common among men) can lead to increased survival rates. Routine screening along with early detection and treatment for some of our nation’s leading cancers including: breast, cervical, colorectal (colon), and lung cancers as recommended by the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) and other guidelines are also intended to improve the overall health status among adults by reducing disability and mortality.<sup>14</sup> An example of preventive health services is cancer screenings. Although some progress has been made, breast cancer and other cancers remain a significant public health challenge.

Although preventive care is included in most health insurance plans, some services may include an out-of-pocket cost, so fluctuations in temporary or permanent income (including among low-income populations and other populations with low socioeconomic status characteristics) may have a greater effect on the use of preventive healthcare services including cancer screenings.<sup>15</sup> The good news is that in some instances, employers have reported that supporting preventative care (without cost-sharing) creates several advantages such as: reducing medical disability costs and preventing illness (94%), keeping employees healthy (84%), and productive (59%).<sup>16</sup>







## Reducing Tobacco Use and Risks Attributed to Tobacco-Related Cancers

Tobacco addiction can be challenging and complex. The illness or morbidity cost attributed to cigarette smoking is expense at the state level, with a median morbidity (illness) cost of \$2.7 billion and ranging from \$291 million to \$16.9 billion. Largest costs are associated with inability to work.

Approximately 85% of lung cancers result from tobacco smoking.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, according to the CDC's most recent reports; cigarette smoking cost the United States more than \$600 billion including:

- More than \$240 billion in healthcare spending,
- Nearly \$185 billion in lost productivity from smoking-related illnesses and health conditions,
- Nearly \$180 billion in lost productivity from smoking-related premature death, and,
- \$7 billion in lost productivity from premature death from secondhand smoke exposure.<sup>19</sup>

Significant differences in secondhand smoke exposure (SHS) by industry, occupation and socioeconomic class continue to exist. Including disproportionately SHS experienced by “blue-collar” workers, thereby placing them at higher risk for lung cancer and other tobacco-related medical conditions.<sup>20</sup> In addition to reducing risks associated with tobacco-related cancers and other medical conditions such as: heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), the adoption of comprehensive smoke-free or tobacco-free policies and regulations can have a positive impact on businesses and industries.<sup>21</sup>

Studies have shown that businesses offering tobacco cessation benefits report an increased number of smokers willing to participate in cessation treatment as well as an increase in those who successfully quit.<sup>22</sup>

### Comprehensive Tobacco Cessation Benefits

The *gold standard* of tobacco cessation coverage is based on the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Clinical Practice Guidelines for Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence, which are universal and deemed effective.<sup>23</sup>

- ✓ No prior authorizations, co-pays or other financial barriers for medication support or cessation counseling
- ✓ At least a 90-day supply of all Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved medications
- ✓ All 3 forms of tobacco cessation counseling (individual, group and phone)
- ✓ A minimum of 4 tobacco cessation counseling sessions annually
- ✓ At least 2 tobacco quit attempts annually







## Numerous Opportunities Exist for Employers to Cultivate a More Supportive Environment by Supporting Cancer Prevention and Survivorship in the Workplace

- Promote ongoing awareness among multiple divisions or departments and all employees about the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP) and Colorectal Cancer Control Program (CRCCP) services.
- Establish collaborations between local health systems (including primary care associations, federally qualified health centers, rural health clinics, national association of free and charitable clinics) and employee health departments, worksite wellness and occupational health departments at chemical plants, manufacturing plants, warehouses, industrial plants, construction, mining, oil/gas, other blue-collar industries and factories to increase awareness about access to the CDC's National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP) at: <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/index.htm> among low-income employees and their families.
- Structure health benefits plans that encourage compliance with recommended routine cancer screenings and other services throughout the cancer continuum of care to prevent "late" stage cancer diagnosis.
- Consider partnering with similar industries or sectors located in the same county or adjacent/neighborhood counties by convening employee health meetings with local health systems using resources that feature state/county level data (geography data) such as the CDC's United States Cancer Statistics (USCS): Data Visualization tool with geography data at: <https://gis.cdc.gov/Cancer/USCS/#/AtAGlance/> enhance or strengthen the company's health-related activities and benefits throughout a shared region within the state.
- Convene employee health meetings using resources that feature state level data such as: America's Health Rankings Annual Report (Health Outcomes-Chronic Conditions section) at: <https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/annual/measure/PrevHosp/state/ALL> to enhance or strengthen the company's health-related activities and benefits.
- Sponsor promotional and educational activities throughout the year to increase awareness and knowledge of comprehensive Tobacco Cessation Coverage (state specific benefits) among employees (including full-time, part-time), their spouses and other family members.
- Promote the availability of free and confidential state tobacco quitline services (including telephonic counseling) in accordance with evidence-guidelines among multiple divisions or departments and all employees (including part-time, temporary, and seasonal).
- Manage disability and leave benefits (including paid sick leave) to support compliance with cancer treatment and recovery as well as return to work options.
- Explore and maximize opportunities for Employee Health Departments to partner with a local or regional network of oncology nurse navigators, patient navigators or community health workers (CHWs).
- Establish partnerships and facilitate trainings or meetings (at least annually) between employers and primary care association, federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), rural health clinics, free clinics and/or county health departments to provide resources to assist managers, supervisors as well as employees as they cope with an employer or coworker's cancer diagnosis.

To learn more, please feel free to contact us.

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## Resources:

America's Health Rankings Annual Report. <https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/annual/measure/PrevHosp/state/ALL>

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) – Cancer, Reproductive, Cardiovascular, and Other Chronic Disease Prevention Program (includes Worker Health Charts by industry/occupation) at: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/crcd/default.html>

CDC Total Health Worker: Making the Business Case Why Do I Need An Integrated Approach to Safety and Health? <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/twh/business.html>

National Cancer Institute (NCI)-Cancer Support Services <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/managing-care/services/support>

CancerCare Services and Workplace Support <https://www.cancercare.org/services>

State Tobacco Cessation Coverage Database (sponsored by the American Lung Association) at: <http://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/tobacco/cessation-and-prevention/state-cessation-coverage.html>

CDC - Colorectal Cancer Control Program (CRCCP) <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/crccp/>

Cancer in the Workplace: Human Resources (HR) Department Tip Sheet (Business Group on Health).  
Access on July 28, 2022 at: <https://www.businessgrouphealth.org/resources/cancer-hr-tip-sheet>

CDC National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP) <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/>

Cancer Care: Managing Costs and Medical Information (National Cancer Institute) <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/managing-care/track-care-costs>

Lung Cancer Screening Health Insurance Coverage Resources (American Lung Association)  
<https://www.lung.org/lung-health-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/lung-cancer/saved-by-the-scan>

CDC Tips from Former Smokers Campaign Resources-Partners <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/partners/php/index.html>

State Lung Cancer Screening Toolkit (American Lung Association)  
<https://www.lung.org/lung-health-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/lung-cancer/saved-by-the-scan/resources/state-lung-cancer-screening>

State of Lung Cancer Report (State level data)-American Lung Association <https://www.lung.org/research/state-of-lung-cancer>

Academy of Oncology Nurses & Patient Navigators- Local Oncology Nurse Navigator Networks  
<https://www.aononline.org/community/local-navigator-networks/>

Cancer and Careers Organization: Resources for Cancer Survivors/Employee Health:  
<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/about-us> <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/partners/php/index.html>

Seven Ways Businesses Can Align with Public Health for Bold Action and Innovation at: <https://debeaumont.org/businesspublichealth/>

SelfMade Health Network (SMHN) Fact Sheet Series: Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Cancer Survivorship at:  
<https://selfmadehealth.org/educate/determinants-of-health-fact-sheets/>

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Foundation at: <https://www.copdfoundation.org/>

