



Reigniting the Cancer Moonshot Initiative

“The experience of cancer — of getting a cancer diagnosis, surviving cancer, losing someone to cancer — has touched virtually every American family.” The White House

What is the Cancer Moonshot Initiative?

In 2022, President Biden announced the relaunch of the federal government’s Cancer Moonshot Initiative. The original Cancer Moonshot Initiative, launched in 2016, continued the almost-100 years of government investment in cancer by focusing on improving scientific discovery, collaboration, and data sharing. The relaunch has even more ambitious goals: Reduce the number of cancer deaths by half and improve cancer care for all Americans within the next 25 years. The national initiative comprises academic institutions, scientists, foundations, non-profit organizations, health systems, leaders from the cancer survivorship and caregiver communities, companies from all industries and sectors, and federal, state, and local government agencies.

Why the Cancer Moonshot Initiative Remains Important

During the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 9 million Americans delayed and missed routine cancer screenings or were not able to schedule new cancer screenings.¹

What steps are being taken to reignite the Cancer Moonshot Initiative?

The White House and The President’s Cancer Panel have outlined a series of steps to reignite the Cancer Moonshot Initiative, including:

- Decreasing persistent cancer-related disparities that cause significant variations in cancer health outcomes from prevention to survivorship and disproportionately affect vulnerable populations.
- Improving cancer treatment through individualized, patient-centered care.
- Increasing patient and community engagement in cancer research to improve access and other important factors associated with cancer outcomes.
- Increasing early and routine cancer screenings, especially among those who missed screenings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹ Wang L. Working to close the cancer screening gap caused by COVID. National Cancer Institute. May 17, 2022. Accessed January 11, 2023. <https://www.cancer.gov/news-events/cancer-currents-blog/2022/covid-increasing-cancer-screening>.

² By improving access to cancer screening, diagnostics, and treatments for all people, including those with low incomes, those of all races, ethnicities, genders, and resources, and those who live in rural communities, metropolitan communities, or tribal regions.

History of the Cancer Moonshot Initiative

1937: President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signs the National Cancer Act of 1937, establishing the National Cancer Institute.

1962: President John F. Kennedy gives a speech promising that Americans will push the limits of human achievement and reach the moon.

1960s: Invoking JFK’s ambitious plan to send a man to the moon, cancer activist Mary Lasker calls for “a moonshot for cancer.”

1971: President Richard Nixon signs the National Cancer Act of 1971, starting a “war on cancer.”

2016: President Barack Obama signs the 21st Century Cures Act, funding the original Cancer Moonshot Initiative.

2022: President Joe Biden reignites the Cancer Moonshot Initiative with the ambitious goal of cutting cancer deaths in half over the next 25 years.



The Goals of the National Cancer Moonshot Initiative

With seven goals, the reignited Cancer Moonshot Initiative aims to develop solutions to positively change the trajectory of cancer care, survivorship, and outcomes nationwide.



Diagnose cancer early



Prevent cancer



Increase cancer equity²



Target the right cancer treatments to the right patients



Improve treatments against deadly and rare cancers



Support cancer patients, cancer survivors, and caregivers



Learn from cancer survivors



Examples of Organizations Involved in the Cancer Moonshot Initiative



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 Consortium of National Networks
 SelfMade Health Network
 (CDC National Disparity Network)
<http://www.selfmadehealth.org/>
[@SelfMadeHealth](#)

What are some promising areas of the Cancer Moonshot Initiative?

The Cancer Moonshot Initiative includes many promising areas.

- **Increased research** will allow a better understanding of the complexities of cancer and how similar cancers affect people differently.
- **Enhanced data sharing** will help revolutionize cancer diagnosis and treatment.
- **Decreasing cancer disparities** will improve cancer care for people who are disproportionately affected by certain cancers due to socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, or geographic location.
- **Increasing prevention and detection** will keep as many people safe from preventable cancers as possible.
- **Increasing support** by expanding patient navigation, increasing the number of community health workers, and improving nurse navigation will change the meaning of a cancer diagnosis and cancer survivorship.

The President's Cancer Panel's Goals to Improve Cancer Equity Through Screening



The President's Cancer Panel, appointed experts who advise the President on improving cancer care for Americans, has released a [guide](#) to improve cancer care and health equity through improved cancer screening. More effective implementation of cancer screening will allow companies, organizations, health systems, and communities to save lives and reduce the burden of cancer.

- Improve and align cancer screening communication.
 - Develop effective communications about cancer screening that reach all populations.
 - Expand and strengthen National Cancer Roundtables that focus on cancer screening.
- Facilitate equitable access to cancer screening.
 - Provide and sustainably fund community outreach and support services to promote appropriate screening and follow-up care.
 - Increase access to self-sampling for cancer screening.
- Strengthen workforce collaborations to support cancer screening and risk assessment.
 - Empower healthcare team members to support screening.
 - Expand access to genetic testing and counseling for cancer risk assessment.
- Create health information technology that promotes appropriate cancer risk assessment and screening.
 - Create computable versions of cancer screening and risk assessment guidelines.
 - Create and deploy effective clinical decision support tools for cancer risk assessment and screening.

The Panel urges all stakeholders to work together to close gaps in cancer screening and ensure that the benefits of cancer screening reach all populations.



How Your Organization Can Support the Cancer Moonshot Initiative

The Cancer Moonshot Initiative is a national “call to action on cancer screening to jump start progress on screenings that were missed as a result of the pandemic, and help ensure that everyone in the United States equitably benefits from the tools we have to prevent, detect, and diagnose cancer.” The White House

There are many ways your organization can support the Cancer Moonshot Initiative. Learn how companies, organizations, health systems, and communities can support the relaunch of the Cancer Moonshot Initiative below.



Goal #1: Diagnose Cancer Early

Promote cancer screening, especially among people who lack comprehensive healthcare coverage, are uninsured, or have low incomes.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s [National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program](#) provides free and low-cost cancer screening resources.
- CDC's [Colorectal Cancer Control Program](#) is working to increase colorectal cancer screening rates.

Foster collaboration between health systems, organizations, and workplaces to coordinate cancer prevention and screening campaigns, host on-site cancer screening events, and share cancer screening resources.

- SelfMade Health Network (SMHN)'s [Healthier Nation Fact Sheet Series](#) features resources to improve employee health for employers of all kinds.

Promote and utilize colorectal cancer screening and prevention resources developed by the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable.

- Promote stool-based colorectal cancer screening with the [Clinician's Reference: Stool-Based Tests for Colorectal Cancer Screening](#).
- Learn how to develop a mailed fecal immunochemical test (FIT) outreach program with the [Mailed FIT Implementation Guide](#).
- Increase colorectal cancer screening with [Steps for Increasing Colorectal Cancer Screening Rates: A Manual for Primary Care Practices](#).
- Help employers increase colorectal cancer screening rates among employees with the [80% In Every Community Employer Challenge Guide](#).

Create systems that allow all healthcare team members to promote and implement cancer screening programs and practices.

- Invest in programs to create risk assessment, screening, and follow-up care guidelines for cancer and other diseases.
- Include clinical decision support for cancer risk assessment and screening in standard Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems.
- Make it easy for clinical decision support developed by others to be integrated into EHR systems.
- Learn how to examine breast and colorectal cancer screening information stratified by socioeconomic status through The Future of HEDIS webinar [Digital Measures and Health Equity](#).
- Learn how to meet The Joint Commission's health care equity standards through the [Health Care Equity Accreditation Standards and Resource Center](#).



Goal #2: Prevent Cancer

Collaborate with health systems to promote lifestyle changes that reduce the risk of preventable cancers.

- Promote early screening with the CDC's [Screen for Life Campaign](#).
- Promote HPV vaccination with CDC's [Inside Knowledge Campaign](#).
- Promote tobacco cessation with CDC's [Patient Cessation Materials](#).

Promote resources to reduce tobacco-related cancers, especially among people who are underinsured, are uninsured, or have low incomes.

- State tobacco quitlines provide free, confidential tobacco cessation services (1-800-QUIT-NOW).
- [Smokefree.gov](#) has free, confidential tobacco cessation services and SmokeFreeTXT programs.
- CDC's [Tips From Former Smokers Campaign](#) has resources for various sectors.

Provide ongoing training to ensure community health workers (CHWs) have the knowledge necessary to do their jobs.

- SMHN's [Cancer Moonshot webinars](#) discuss a range of topics, including how to support CHWs.



Goal #3: Increase Cancer Equity¹

Share tobacco cessation resources with people in communities that are disproportionately targeted by aggressive tobacco marketing.

- CDC's guide [Improving Tobacco-Related Disparities](#) discusses the causes of tobacco-related disparities and ways to improve them.
- CDC [Quitlines](#) are free and available in multiple languages.

Help people find adequate health insurance coverage to support cancer screening, treatment, and survivorship.

- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' 2022 [From Coverage to Care Enrollment Toolkit](#) helps people find care and understand health insurance coverage.

Build partnerships with CHW associations to establish a routine source of medical care for people in communities in need² through safety net health systems.

- [National Association of Community Health Workers](#) brings together CHWs from around the United States.

¹ By improving access to cancer screening, diagnostics, and treatments for all people, including those with low incomes, those of all races, ethnicities, genders, and resources, and those who live in rural communities, metropolitan communities, or tribal regions.



Goal #4: Target the Right Cancer Treatments to the Right Patients

Partner with organizations that serve to increase awareness of the availability of clinical trials.

- National Cancer Institute (NCI) has a [list of current clinical trials](#).

Support and promote cancer research and data sharing initiatives.

- NCI has a list of Cancer Moonshot [research initiatives](#).

Increase genetic testing to identify those at high risk of developing certain cancers.

- Enable providers to offer genetic testing with informed consent.
- Eliminate requirements for pretest counseling by a certified genetic counselor or medical geneticist for coverage of genetic testing.



Goal #5: Improve Treatments Against Deadly and Rare Cancers

Expand health system interventions to reduce late-stage lung cancer.

- The National Lung Cancer Roundtable [LungPlan Overview](#) helps organizations develop a plan to establish or expand lung cancer screening and nodule management programs.

Connect patients with NCI's programs for people with deadly and rare cancers.

- [NCI-CONNECT](#) helps people with rare central nervous system cancers.
- NCI's [MyPART](#) helps adults and children with rare tumors.



Goal #6: Support Cancer Patients, Cancer Survivors, and Caregivers

Utilize resources designed to reduce the risk of cancer recurrence among cancer survivors.

- NCI's monograph [Treating Smoking in Cancer Patients: An Essential Component of Cancer Care](#) includes strategies to assist cancer survivors with tobacco cessation.

Connect cancer survivors with relevant resources.

- NCI's [Partners in Cancer Research Portal](#) connects patients with Cancer Moonshot-supported resources.



Goal #7: Learn from Cancer Survivors

Partner with organizations in communities in need² to increase awareness of the value of participating in research programs that share patients' stories and data while respecting their privacy.

- National Institutes of Health's [All of Us Research Program](#) is gathering information on the health of Americans from all backgrounds.
- NCI's [Cancer Moonshot Biobank](#) uses samples from cancer patients to improve future cancer treatments.

Encourage cancer survivors to share their stories.

- Places to Share:
 - On Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, using #CancerMoonshot
 - Through newsletters, blogs, and websites
 - On the White House's [official Cancer Moonshot page](#)

² Including communities that are rural, metropolitan, tribal, medically underserved, pharmacy deserts, or food deserts, that lack broadband access, or that have high numbers of people who are uninsured, are underinsured, or have low incomes.