

## CANCER: A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO PREVENTION AND CONTROL

### WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE?

- Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States, exceeded only by heart disease.
- One of every four deaths in the United States is from cancer. In 2004, an estimated 563,700 Americans will die of cancer—more than 1,500 people a day.
- The overall estimated cost for cancer in the United States in 2003 was \$189.5 billion, including healthcare expenditures and lost productivity from illness and death.
- Cancer is largely controllable through prevention, early detection, and treatment. However, the lack of coordination and integration of efforts between health agencies and their partners has hampered the effectiveness of cancer control activities.

### WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

With funds from CDC's Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion appropriations, CDC supports many state cancer registries and state cancer prevention and control programs, including those for breast, cervical, skin, colorectal, ovarian, and prostate cancers. These programs have made enormous strides in their own areas, but have lacked a comprehensive, coordinated focus. A comprehensive cancer control approach integrates and coordinates activities for prevention, early detection, treatment, rehabilitation, pain relief, and patient and family care during survivorship. A key component to the success of this approach is establishing partnerships between public and private sector stakeholders whose common mission is to reduce the burden of cancer. To build a coordinated focus for cancer efforts, CDC funds 51 programs to either create or implement comprehensive cancer control plans. These programs integrate the full range of cancer prevention activities, including research; evaluation; health education and communication; program development; public policy development; surveillance; and clinical services. By integrating these activities, health agencies and their partners use limited resources more efficiently; improve community-based education and health promotion; share expertise; and effectively address at-risk populations.

#### *Example of Program in Action*

Hawaii credits its Comprehensive Cancer Control Program with facilitating the successful passage of cancer legislation that potentially will decrease healthcare costs while addressing the burden of cancer. The new legislation replaced a seemingly outdated mandate (with a narrow focus on cervical cancer screening among female hospital inpatients) with new and broader legislation relating to cancer examinations as part of a statewide comprehensive cancer control plan to be developed by the department of health. The plan will include provisions for cancer examination, including cervical cancer screening, and the department will be working with other government agencies, healthcare providers, health insurers, and others to improve overall rates of screening, early diagnosis, and treatment of cancer.

### WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

CDC plans to support comprehensive cancer control programs in more states, territories, and tribal organizations. Most states have developed comprehensive cancer plans or are in the process of creating them, but lack the resources necessary to carry out their plans. CDC will continue to offer technical support and tools to assist with the development and implementation of comprehensive cancer control efforts, as well as conduct evaluation research to help direct future program activities.