



The Health Burden of Cancer

PA 513 – Policy Development, Evaluation and Impact for Organizations

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Conclusion

From the analysis of existing pieces of literature, it is apparent that cancer is major public health concern in the U.S. It is a significant cause of poor quality of life and wellbeing, mortality of people of all ages, as well as a major contributor of heavy financial burdens for individuals, families, communities, states, and the entire country. Various preventive measures have been adopted by local, state, and federal agencies in the U.S. to mitigate the rising prevalence of cancer. Besides, there is a widespread disparity among population groups across the U.S. with regards to access and uptake of cancer screening, management, and treatment services, as well as access to the necessary information on the possible etiologies and risk factors for cancer. Consequently, a significant number of Americans seek medical attention in the third or fourth stages of the disease, yet, the early diagnosis of cancer is recognized as a principal factor that accounts for survivorship among oncology patients. Findings from a systematic review show that patient delay in seeking for clinical help after the manifestation of symptoms is likely to play a role in the late-stage detection of cancer.^[1] Thus, the paper proposed a policy approach that recommends a multi-stakeholder partnership among public and private players, including environmentalists, clinical professionals, and public health experts, as well as members of the community, to broaden cancer awareness. Specifically, the policy advocates for additional funding to finance customized research to identify the most common forms of cancers in specific communities.

[1] Joan Austoker et al., "Interventions to Promote Cancer Awareness and Early Presentation: Systematic Review," *British Journal of Cancer* 101, no. S2 (2009): S31–39, <https://doi.org/10.1038/sj.bjc.6605388>.