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More than 40,000 New York City residents were diagnosed with cancer annually between 2011-15

New report calls on Mayor de Blasio and the City Council to take decisive steps to reduce cancer

NEW YORK, NY – February 14, 2019 – So many people are diagnosed with cancer every year in New York City that they could fill Madison Square Garden, twice—more than 40,000. That’s according to a report released today by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

Four types of cancer - lung, prostate, breast, and colorectal, make up nearly 50 percent of all cancer cases in New York City, and nearly 50 percent of all cancer deaths in the city, according to the new report, “Reducing the Cancer Burden In New York City.” Using data from the New York State Cancer Registry the report identifies trends in cancer cases and deaths to inform policymakers on how to prevent new cases of cancer, increase access to quality cancer treatment, reduce disparities in incidences and mortality and enhance the quality of life for those suffering from the disease.

Cancer cases and cancer deaths differ greatly among boroughs and the neighborhoods making up New York City, in part reflecting the diverse socioeconomic and demographic characteristics across New York City.

Staten Island had the highest cancer incident rate of all the boroughs. The Morris Heights, Fordham South and Mount Hope area of the Bronx had the highest cancer incidence rates of all neighborhoods among men. The Tottenville, Great Kills and Annadale area of Staten Island had the highest cancer incidence rates of all neighborhoods among women.

“Nearly every New Yorker from every neighborhood has been touched by cancer in some way.” said Michael Davoli, director, Metro New York government relations of ACS CAN. “This report demonstrates that we know how to reduce the cancer burden in New York City, if only we have the will to do so.”

The report includes detailed policy recommendations for how to tackle cancer in New York City and calls on Mayor de Blasio and the City Council to take decisive steps to reduce the cancer burden in New York City. Specifically, the report calls for restricting the sale of all flavored tobacco products including menthol and electronic cigarettes, investing in programs that will improve access to affordable healthy foods in neighborhoods with limited options, requiring that healthy drinks are the default options on kids’ menus in restaurants, increasing funding for cancer screening programs, and launching an aggressive campaign to increase HPV vaccination rates in New York City among other recommendations.

“Something in life happens to us, to make us mad enough, to make us passionate enough, to fight and advocate for ourselves and others,” said **Diane Nathaniel of Brooklyn**. “For me it was Stage 3 Colon Cancer.”

“Despite the many improvements to health reported by city and state health officials, cancer is still a depressing problem that differs amongst racial and ethnic minority groups, and neighborhoods in our City,” said **Dr. Tenya Blackwell of the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health**. “It’s time that the health care delivery system takes comprehensive redesign measures to partner with local community-based health organizations poised to address the social, economic and environmental factors; like access to healthy and affordable food, that will go much further at preventing disease, eliminating disparities, and reducing cancer risks and burdens in New York City”.

"As a physician, I see how cancer impacts so many lives. But, this American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network report suggests that for New Yorkers the burdens of cancer vary across race/ethnicity, gender, and geography,” said **Dr. Justin List, Assistant Vice President, Ambulatory Care at NYC Health + Hospitals**. “While many factors influence cancer risk, certain levers can help address the root causes that drive the risks posed by tobacco use and excess weight, for example. Advancing public health education, improving access to preventive and treatment services, ending social injustices that affect individual and community health, and making healthier choices the easier choices are actions we can all rally around.”

The complete report may be found at www.fightcancer.org/cancerburdennyc.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is making cancer a top priority for public officials and candidates at the federal, state and local levels. ACS CAN empowers advocates across the country to make their voices heard and influence evidence-based public policy change as well as legislative and regulatory solutions that will reduce the cancer burden. As the American Cancer Society’s nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate, ACS CAN is critical to the fight for a world without cancer. For more information, visit www.fightcancer.org.

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Key Findings Include:

- On average, approximately 40,126 New York City residents were diagnosed with cancer annually between 2011-2015, nearly twice the capacity of Madison Square Garden, with 12,453 dying from the disease annually during this period.
- Four cancers - lung, prostate, breast and colorectal - account for nearly half (47.4 percent) of all cancer diagnoses and nearly half (45 percent) of all cancer deaths in New York City from 2011-2015.
- Lung and bronchus cancer is the single largest cause of cancer death, causing nearly 2,700 deaths yearly from 2011-2015.
- Female breast cancer is New York City's most commonly diagnosed cancer among women, with nearly 6,000 women diagnosed annually between 2011-15, whereas prostate cancer was the most common among men (nearly 5,400 new cases annually from 2011-2015).
- Men and women living on Staten Island have the highest incidence rate of new cancer cases overall on average annually between 2011-2015.
- Men living in the Morris Heights, Fordham South and Mount Hope area of the Bronx, and women living in the Tottenville, Great Kills and Annadale area of Staten Island have the approximate highest cancer incidence rate overall.

Additional findings and recommendations are included in the report.