

CANCER NOTES



"Joining forces for cancer control in Virginia"

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TUCP Holds Annual Meeting in November—The VDH Tobacco Use Control Project (TUCP)

will host its Annual Meeting on November 15, 2007 at the Greater Richmond Convention Center. The meeting features **Dr. Victor DeNoble**, former tobacco industry research scientist, as the keynote speaker. The National LGBT Tobacco Control Network will also present at the meeting. For more information or to register, contact Karen Burruss, TUCP Training Coordinator (Karen.Burruss@vdh.virginia.gov), or visit the TUCP website (<http://www.vahealth.org/cdpc/tobaccouse/>).

CCC STAFF ATTENDS CDC CANCER CONFERENCE



The project manager and epidemiologist for the Comprehensive Cancer Prevention and Control (CCC) Project attended the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) biannual cancer meeting, held on August 13-16, 2007, in Atlanta, Georgia. The conference theme Meeting Future Challenges was addressed through four days of presentations and discussions on key issues related to cancer prevention and early detection. The opening plenary session was followed by sessions on Building Partnerships, Workforce Development and Policy, and Emerging Technologies. To view and download Powerpoint presentations, go to the conference website (<http://cdccancer-conference.net/>).

One of the many highlights of the meeting were the presentations and discussions on shortages in the cancer healthcare workforce. Many healthcare professions are experiencing shortages. C-Change, an organization comprised of

the nation's key cancer leaders from government, business, and nonprofit sectors, has identified this as a significant problem.

Recognizing that an adequate number of qualified health professionals are necessary to assure access to cancer care, C-Change has developed a Workforce Speaker Tool Kit targeting students to choose health careers. In addition, C-Change has developed the Cancer Core Competency Initiative to bolster the basic cancer knowledge and skills of the present cancer healthcare workforce. To find out more about the core competency initiative, visit <http://www.c-changetogether.org> and click on News and Reports. Contact Brandi Stevenson at bstevenson@C-Changetogether.org to order a toolkit.



PATIENT NAVIGATORS HELP COLONCANCER SURVIVORS



The Patient Advocate Foundation is pleased to announce the Colorectal CareLine (CCL). The national toll free hotline, which is based in Newport News, Virginia, is designed to offer assistance to all colorectal cancer patients and providers seeking educational resources, direct assistance with access to care issues and/or financial aid. The CCL,

staffed by clinical case managers with both nursing and social work background, are able to assist with navigating through the reimbursement system, providing direct appeals assistance and educational resources to include disease specific literature, managed care information and financial resource

(Continued on page 4—"Patient Navigators")

CANCER REGISTRY RELEASES DATA ON LEADING TYPES OF CANCERS IN VIRGINIA

Based on newly released data from the **Virginia Cancer Registry**, over 152,000 cancer cases—79,000 in males and 73,000 in females— were diagnosed in Virginia in the five years spanning 2000 to 2004. There were over 32,000 cases diagnosed in 2004 alone.

Prostate cancer (30.9%) was the most commonly diagnosed cancer among men (see **Top 10 Cancers among Males and Females in Virginia** below). The number of prostate cancer cases was almost twice that of lung and bronchus cancer (16.1%), which was the second most common male cancer. Colorectal cancers (10.9%) ranked third among men. Urinary bladder cancer was the fourth most common cancer diagnosed among men. Melanoma of the skin (4.2%) ranked fifth among male cancers. These five cancers account for over two-thirds (68%) of male cancers in Virginia.

In contrast to males, breast cancer

(32.6%) and two sex-specific cancers were among the ten most common female cancers between 2000 and 2004. Cancer of the uterus (5.6%) ranked fourth, and ovarian cancer (3.4%) was sixth of all cancers diagnosed among females. Similar to males, lung cancer (13.3%) ranked second and colorectal cancer (11.6%) ranked third among females. Thyroid cancer (2.4%) was the seventh most common female cancer. However, it was not among the top ten male cancers. The scientific reason for this difference is unknown. The top five cancers accounted for two-thirds of cancer cases among females.

For more information about diagnosed cancers in Virginia, contact the Virginia Cancer Registry of the Virginia Department of Health at (804) 864-7866, or go to their website at <http://www.vahealth.org/cdpc/cancer/>.



Top 10 Cancers among Males in Virginia (Count and Percent), 2000 – 2004			Top 10 Cancers among Females in Virginia (Count and Percent), 2000 – 2004																																																																
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Source: Virginia Cancer Registry.

FREE CLINIC GETS FUNDING FROM LANCE ARMSTRONG FOUNDATION

Arlington Free Clinic (AFC) is now at the mid-way point of a two-year \$50,000 grant from the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF) to support a cancer patient navigation program. Last year, AFC was one of 27 community, non-profit organizations across the country to receive LAF grants to help people with the physical, emotional, and practical challenges of cancer. AFC has 42 patients who are cancer survivors.

With funding from LAF, AFC is implementing a patient navigation program to address practical issues of survivorship to include language and culture, short and long-term financial concerns, social support and disease and life-style education. During the two-year project,

AFC will assess community resources and identify specific barriers for low income cancer survivors and develop strategies to reduce these barriers.



Patients from Arlington Free Clinic, who are cancer survivors, join together for the Lance Armstrong Foundation's LiveSTRONG© Day.

RAM EVENT IN SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA HELPS THOUSANDS

Thousands of people from Southwest Virginia and neighboring Appalachian states attended the eighth annual Remote Area Medical (RAM) Health Expedition, held on the Wise County Fairgrounds, from July 20-22. More than 1,200 healthcare providers and other volunteers from all over the country, and Virginia in particular, helped to deliver free medical, dental and vision services as well as education to the working poor, uninsured, and underinsured in what is called the "largest free health care clinic in the world."

This year, an estimated **8,400 patient encounters** occurred at a value of care estimated to be over **\$1.4 million**, beating last year's record of 8,000 patient counters and \$1.3 million worth of services. Medical services included cancer screenings—Pap smears, breast exams, colon and prostate cancer screening. Fol-

low-up care was also arranged.

An appearance by Virginia Governor Tim Kaine, with his family, at this year's event was cancelled due to bad weather. Gov. Kaine has been a regular attendee at past RAM events, during his tenure as lieutenant governor and now as Governor. Former Senator and presidential hopeful John Edwards lent the event some national publicity. He met with event organizers and volunteers prior to the event to engage in a dialogue about poverty and healthcare disparities as part of his "Road to One America" campaign tour.

As Teresa Gardner, nurse practitioner and executive director of St. Mary's Health Wagon, explained, "...it is so important for those [who] can't afford quality health care to come out, take advantage of quality care, and enhance their quality of life."



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PATIENT NAVIGATORS (CONT'D.)

Cancer Notes

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This publication is available to state and local partners, health districts, and healthcare providers interested in preventing and controlling cancer in Virginia. If you have a story to share about your organization or community, please contact us.

information. Case managers are able to provide clinical trials education and/or screening, and provide referrals to appropriate co-payment programs and network patients to all known resources for financial assistance. Additionally, case managers can provide referrals and linkage to appropriate educational resources and provide case management services to uninsured patients, ensuring access to care and enrollment into Medicaid and/or charity care programs.

The CCL has also established the Financial Aid Fund (FAF), a small financial assistance grant program for patients in need of debt crisis assistance related to their colorectal diagnosis. FAF provides a one-time grant of \$200 to individuals who have been diagnosed with colorectal cancer and earn \$75,000 or less regardless of family size. Grants are available for tempo-

rary housing assistance, transportation to and from treatment, childcare and food costs incurred as a result of out of town treatment.

The impact of CCL on Virginians can best be summed up in the words of Mrs. C. Budd, of Onley, Virginia, a colorectal cancer patient's wife:

"My husband had a reoccurrence of his colon cancer after four years. Due to so many medical bills he took out a loan from a local company. Being self employed and unable to work due to chemotherapy, my sole income was unable to pay for all our bills. [CCL] Case Manager was able to have his loan payment postponed until he received his first disability check. Great job!!"

Call Colorectal CareLine toll-free at 1-866-657-8634, or visit them on the Web (<http://www.colorectalcareline.org> or www.patientadvocate.org)

