



Every day, almost 1,600 people in America die from cancer. About half of all cancer deaths could be prevented by applying proven prevention and early detection strategies.

Social, economic, and environmental factors have tremendous influence on an individual's ability to establish and maintain healthy behaviors to reduce their cancer risk and risk of other chronic diseases. And despite enormous advances in the prevention of disease, the health care system historically focused on treating people after they became sick or injured, instead of keeping them well in the first place. A comprehensive plan to address all barriers is necessary to make prevention a national priority. Strategic actions and investments in evidence-based approaches, such as tobacco quitlines, cancer screening programs, nutrition programs, and improved neighborhood design can lower disease rates, reduce socioeconomic and racial/ethnic disparities, and increase productivity. Because health is not achieved only in the doctor's office, partners from all sectors, including government, nonprofit, faith, and business must be part of the solution.

Making prevention and early detection a national priority will improve health and save lives.

Highlights of the National Prevention Strategy

On June 16, 2011, the [National Prevention Council](#) released the [National Prevention Strategy](#), a comprehensive plan to increase the number of Americans who are healthy at every stage of life. Framed by four strategic directions and seven priority areas, the Strategy provides actions that public and private organizations can take to prioritize prevention. A year later, the Council released the [National Prevention Council Action Plan](#) to outline the federal member departments' commitments and actions to implementing the Strategy.

The Council is comprised of 20 federal departments, 17 of which were mandated by the health care law. The U.S. Surgeon General chairs the Council. The Council is supported by a non-federal [Advisory Group](#), which has met 10 times since its inception in order to provide advice and guidance to the Council on the development and implementation of the Strategy. Society and ACS CAN CEO John R. Seffrin, Ph.D. represents the cancer community as a member of the Advisory Group.

Provisions of the health care law:

- Establishes an interagency National Prevention, Health Promotion and Public Health Council to:
 - Develop a National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy to be reviewed by the Secretary of Health and Human Services no less than every five years,
 - Provide coordination and leadership on prevention, wellness, health promotion practices, the public health system, and integrative health care,
 - Establish a 25-member, nongovernmental Advisory Group to the Council to develop policy and program recommendations, and
 - Report annually to the President and Congress on priorities in health promotion and disease prevention (*through January 2015*).

Implications for the American Cancer Society and American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)

- The Society and ACS CAN will help to implement and improve the National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy through public comments and other avenues.
- The Society and ACS CAN will continue to participate in the non-federal Advisory Group through the membership of our Chief Executive Officer, John Seffrin, PhD.