

# Colorectal Cancer Control Program Helps to Prevent Colorectal Cancer & Save Lives



Fightcancer.org

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Colorectal Cancer Control Program (CRCCP) – established by Congress in 2009 – provides grant funding to 20 state health departments, eight universities, and two tribal organizations over a five-year period to help prevent colorectal cancer.<sup>1</sup> Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer in men and women and the second leading cause of cancer death in the U.S. for men and women combined.<sup>2</sup> An estimated 149,500 men and women will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer in 2021 and 52,980 individuals are estimated to die from the disease.<sup>3</sup> The goal of the CRCCP grant work is to increase colorectal cancer screening rates among high-need groups. Without a continued, dedicated federal investment in colorectal cancer prevention and early detection, the U.S. could experience a reduction in screening leading to increases in preventable colorectal cancer cases and deaths.

## Screening Rates for Colorectal Cancer Remain Low in High-Risk Americans

**Colorectal cancer screening is the most effective way of preventing cancer before it starts and finding it early when it's most treatable.** During the screening process non-cancerous polyps can be removed preventing them from becoming cancerous. Cancers that are found at an early stage can be treated more easily, and lead to greater survival.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the benefits of screening, less than 70 percent of individuals 50 to 75 years old report being screened for colorectal cancer.<sup>5</sup> Disparities in screening rates for colorectal cancer exist among uninsured adults; those without a high school diploma; those between the ages of 50-55; those in rural communities; and those of Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian/Alaska Native descent,<sup>4</sup> contributing to higher death rates from the disease.

### The CRCCP & its Grantees:<sup>7</sup>

- **Partner** with health systems that serve people less likely to get screened and more likely to die from colorectal cancer.
- **Improve** the use of evidence-based public health strategies shown to increase screening – including removing barriers.
- **Monitor** the impact of strategies on screening rates.

## Colorectal Cancer Control Program Improves Screening & Saves Lives



Clinics



Health Systems



Providers



Patients aged 50-75

**Through the first 4 years of the program more than 1.3 million patients aged 50 to 75 have been served.**<sup>6</sup> Clinics that have participated in the program for 2 years have increased their screening rates by 8.2 percent, those who have participated for 4 years increased screening rates by 12.3 percent.<sup>6</sup> CRCCP grantees are encouraged to incorporate evidence-based interventions from the *Guide to Community Preventive Services*,

including client and provider-oriented interventions. Client-oriented interventions may include the use of small media to raise awareness and reducing structural barriers for patients. Provider-oriented interventions include reminders/recall systems and assessment/feedback. **Maintaining or increasing funding for the CRCCP program has the potential to significantly improve screening rates for high-need populations across the U.S. and reduce the burden of colorectal cancer for thousands or even millions of Americans.**

## Call to Action

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) strongly **opposes any Administrative or Congressional efforts to cut or eliminate funding for the CRCCP**, which could reduce screening and add to the colorectal cancer burden in the U.S. The CRCCP is an essential program in the fight against cancer, as it helps to reduce health inequities by serving those at most risk for the disease.

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Colorectal Cancer Control Program: About the program. Updated June 24, 2020. Accessed February 3, 2021. <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/crccp/about.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> American Cancer Society. Colorectal Cancer Facts & Figures 2017-2019. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2017.

<sup>3</sup> American Cancer Society. *Cancer Facts & Figures 2021*. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2021.

<sup>4</sup> American Cancer Society. *Cancer Prevention & Early Detection Facts & Figures 2019-2020*. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Population Health. BRFSS Prevalence & Trends Data [online]. 2019. Accessed February 03, 2021. <https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence/>.

<sup>6</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Colorectal Cancer Control Program: Spotlight on Year 4. Updated October 26, 2020. Accessed February 3, 2021. <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/crccp/year4.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Colorectal Cancer Control Program: Increasing Screening to Save Lives. Accessed February 25, 2021. [https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/crccp/pdf/CRCCP\\_factsheet\\_SavingLives.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/crccp/pdf/CRCCP_factsheet_SavingLives.pdf).