

2025 New York State Legislative Priorities

In 2025, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) will work with the New York State policymakers on legislative and regulatory efforts that provide affordable, adequate access to health insurance including Medicaid, ensure adequate funding for lifesaving cancer screening and prevention programs, and enact prevention policies to protect kids from tobacco products and help support those who are trying to quit. We will be making the following fact-based policies a priority and ask for your support:

Improving Patient Outcomes

- **Expand Patient Navigation Services:** ACS CAN seeks to improve cancer outcomes for patients and reduce health payer costs by increasing community-based patient navigation services for everyone at risk of cancer, those diagnosed with cancer, and cancer survivors. Patient navigators have been shown to help increase cancer screenings rates, help patients better understand treatment options after diagnosis and help ensure patients receive the post treatment care they need in survivorship. In 2025 ACS CAN will advocate for the following:
 - **Require Reimbursement for Patient Navigation Services:** ACS CAN will advocate for legislation that will require all state regulated health plans in New York State, including Medicaid, to reimburse for patient navigation services.
 - **Direct Funding for Patient Navigation:** ACS CAN will advocate for New York State to appropriate **\$3,000,000** in funding for oncological patient navigation services to be awarded via a competitive grant process to nonprofit organizations working in the counties with the lowest screening rates and/or highest cancer mortality rates as determined by the New York State Department of Health, and with experience providing community-based navigation or similar services.
- **Paid Family and Medical Leave:** ACS CAN will advocate for legislation that ensures all working cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers have access to paid family and medical leave that allows them to take time off work to deal with their own or a loved one's care without losing their job or income.
- **Health Coverage for All:** ACS CAN believes that access to health care is a right that should be afforded to all, regardless of one's immigration status. ACS CAN will advocate for legislation to extend health coverage to undocumented individuals.
- **Genetic Testing Discrimination:** The fear of genetic discrimination is leading some individuals to forgo needed cancer screenings or decline participation in clinical trials involving genetic sequencing. ACS CAN will advocate for protecting New Yorkers from genetic testing discrimination.

Cancer Prevention and Early Detection

- **Breast, Cervical and Colorectal Cancer:** ACS CAN will advocate for a restoration of **\$2.5 million** in funding for the New York State Cancer Services Program, the state breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening and treatment program for low-income uninsured and underinsured women and men administered by the New York State Department of Health. The increase would bring the total annualized appropriation to **\$22,325,000**.
- **Lung Cancer:** Despite the effectiveness of lung cancer screening, uptake has been low, with only about 6.5% of the 8.5 million eligible individuals nationwide getting screened. Research shows that

barriers to screening for individuals who need preventive services are contributing to lung cancer being the number one cause of cancer deaths.

- ACS CAN will advocate for the passage of legislation to require all insurance plans, including traditional Medicaid, to provide a comprehensive benefit for lung cancer screening including all follow-up testing according to recommended guidelines, without enrollee cost sharing or other barriers.
- Lung cancer is the only form of cancer that can be detected early through routine screening where prior authorization is required prior to a patient getting screened. ACS CAN will advocate for legislation to reform prior authorization for lung cancer screening to ensure that it should be as timely, efficient and standardized as possible.
- ACS CAN will advocate for legislation to add lung cancer to the list of cancers for which treatment can be provided by the NYS Medicaid Cancer Treatment Program. Currently only breast, cervical, colorectal, and prostate cancer are included.
- **HPV:** ACS CAN will advocate for legislation to increase the uptake of the HPV vaccine including strengthening school vaccination requirements and appropriating funding for HPV vaccine education and administration focused on the importance of vaccination for all New Yorkers and combatting disinformation efforts.

Reducing the Toll of Tobacco

- **Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Funding:** ACS CAN will advocate for a restoration of **\$7.5 million** in funding for fact-based, statewide tobacco prevention and cessation programs to bring the annualized total to **\$46.658 million**. Increasing the annualized funding to \$46.658 million will allow the program to increase outreach to communities where tobacco use continues to have a troubling impact.
- **Tobacco Tax Parity:** ACS CAN will advocate for legislation to ensure that all other tobacco products are taxed at the same rate as cigarettes to encourage people who use tobacco to quit rather than switching to lower-priced alternatives and help prevent youth from starting any tobacco product.
- **Menthol Cigarettes and All Other Flavored Tobacco Products:** ACS CAN will advocate for legislation to end the sale of menthol cigarettes and all other flavored tobacco products including all tobacco products, all flavors, and all tobacco retailers.
- **Improve Medicaid Coverage for Smoking Cessation Services:** ACS CAN will advocate for Medicaid to cover phone counseling so that enrollees have access to comprehensive cessation benefits. While all FDA-approved cessation medications as well as individual and group cessation counseling are covered, phone cessation counseling remains uncovered. People respond differently to different interventions; therefore, coverage for a range of counseling types and medications is essential.

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.

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