

ACS CAN Priorities - Year End Package 2020

The Congressional package passed at the end of December held significant victories for ACS CAN's legislative agenda. Signed into law by President Trump, it will ensure increased access to care, accelerate cures and reduce the burden of tobacco.

Increases in funding for cancer research conducted at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Cancer Institute (NCI). In a tough budget environment, the spending bill includes a \$1.25 billion increase for NIH, including a nearly \$120 million increase for the NCI.

- Rarely has the importance of medical research been more apparent than during this ongoing pandemic. Increasing federal funding for NIH and NCI is a first step toward promoting further discovery. Critical clinical trials that could yield new means of preventing, diagnosing and treating serious health conditions, including cancer, rely on consistent, substantial funding increases.
- We are thankful that funding for the NIH and NCI keeps up with medical inflation. However, looking ahead we cannot lose ground and must continue to provide robust, sustained funding increases for biomedical research to continue the progress we have seen in cancer and other diseases.

Funding for cancer control programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will get a \$125 million increase which includes a \$5.8 million increase for cancer control programs. The Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) will see a \$7.5 million funding increase for its work reducing tobacco use.

- The pandemic has resulted in large numbers of Americans delaying or forgoing essential cancer screenings like mammograms and colonoscopies. This is due to many factors: fears of contracting the virus, pandemic-related medical closures, or the loss of employer-sponsored health coverage as a result of pandemic-induced layoffs. These missed screenings in 2020 will lead to increased demand for CDC cancer prevention and detection programs in 2021.
- Early detection can be the difference between life and death in a cancer diagnosis, so ensuring more individuals have access to these screenings is crucial to moving us closer to a world with less cancer.

Waiving Medicare coinsurance for certain colorectal cancer screening tests. The Removing Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Act has been an ACS CAN priority for 10 years, and accomplishing this was a huge milestone in ACS CAN's work to reduce colorectal cancer.

- Year after year, ACS CAN volunteers made sure that Members of Congress continued supporting our effort to eliminate surprise bills for Medicare patients who received a colonoscopy. This exciting policy change will now be phased in over a number of years to manage its costs while saving more lives from colon and rectal cancer.

The Henrietta Lacks Enhancing Cancer Research Act was included in the year-end package.

- The bill is named in honor of Henrietta Lacks, a Black woman who died from cervical cancer and whose cells were taken without her consent. To this day, cells cultivated during Mrs. Lacks' treatment have been used by medical researchers for some of modern medicine's most important breakthroughs. This bill is an important step toward reducing health disparities

and making sure communities of color are represented in clinical trials, and will be a living tribute to Lacks.

Ending surprise medical bills when you visit the ER or have a scheduled medical procedure, and for the first time, requiring that patients be given a true and honest medical bill in advance of scheduled procedures, so patients know what to expect.

- The new federal law will largely eliminate surprise bills received in emergency settings and from out-of-network providers at in-network facilities beginning in January 2022.
- According to ACS CAN research, nearly a quarter of all cancer patients and survivors have experienced a surprise medical bill as a result of inadvertently getting care from an out-of-network provider.
- This legislation will provide long-needed peace of mind to patients during this especially difficult time.

Medicaid Coverage of Routine Care Costs for Patients Enrolled in Clinical Trials. Medicaid enrollees will have access to life-saving therapies by ensuring coverage of routine patient costs associated with qualifying clinical trials.

- Under the new federal law, state Medicaid programs will cover routine costs of clinical trial participation beginning in January 2022.

Includes language that requires in-person age verification when online purchases of e-cigarette and vaping products are delivered. Another ACS CAN supported bill working to reduce youth access to tobacco products. This legislation closes the loophole that allows online e-cigarette vendors to sell to customers without verifying their age at the point of delivery thereby preventing underage sales of these tobacco products to minors.

Extends funding through 2023 for Community Health Centers at current levels (\$4B). Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) are a vital component to ensuring access to health care. Community health centers provide access to quality preventive and primary care services that are critical for cancer patients, survivors and all who need screenings.

- Extension of this funding will provide community health centers with reliable, stable, and adequate funding to ensure that low-income, underinsured Americans continue to have access to primary care in a community setting.

Reauthorization of the Young Women's Breast Health Education and Awareness Requires Learning Young Act (the EARLY ACT) of 2009. Reauthorization of the young women's breast health awareness and education program at \$9 million for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2026. Through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the EARLY Act is working to increase the awareness of breast cancer and improve the health and quality of life of young breast cancer survivors and young women at higher risk of getting this disease. Through evidence-based interventions, young women are provided with the information they need to advocate for their own health. In addition, health care providers are given information about the specific threats and warning signs of breast cancer in younger women that will lead to early detection, diagnosis, and survival.

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Nonprofit Relief. The package increased the amount of charitable donations that are can be deducted from taxes, even for filers who don't itemize. The above-the-line deduction was raised to \$600 for joint filers; unmarried or separate filers can still deduct up to \$300. Additionally, the federal government will be shouldering half of the cost of unemployment benefits for nonprofit employees through March 2021.