

Delaware Cancer Consortium

Advisory Council

July 14, 2025

Approved Minutes

HYBRID MEETING

In-person location:

Thomas Collins Bldg, Dover DE

Members

Participated

Deborah Brown, CHES – Chair

Did not Participate

Eric Buckson – Delaware Senate

Did not Participate

Natalie Crisenzo – Office of the Governor

Did not Participate

Bethany Hall-Long, RNC, PhD – University of Delaware

Did not Participate

Rachel Hersh - Chief Executive Office, La Red Health Center

Did not Participate

Amy Gootee-Ash – Public Health Program Director, Delaware State University

Did not Participate

Stephanie Guarino - Nemours's Children's Health

Did not Participate

Kendra Johnson – Delaware House of Representatives

Did not Participate

Valerie Jones Giltner – Delaware House of Representatives

Participated

Awele Maduka, MD – State Medical Director

Participated

Kevin Meyers - Deputy Policy Director, Office of the Governor

Did not Participate

Meg Maley, RN, BSN – Welldoc, Inc.

Did not Participate

Marie Pinkney – Delaware Senate

Participated

Renitia Pulliam - Nurse Supervisor - Oncology, Christiana Care

Participated

Tim Ratsep – Delaware of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

Participated

Rishi Sawhney, MD – Bayhealth Medical Center

Participated

Thomas Schwaab , MD - Medical Director Helen F. Graham Cancer Center

Participated

James Spellman, MD, FACS, FSSO – Beebe Healthcare - Tunnell Cancer Center

Did not Participate

Scott Siegal, MD – Christiana Care - Helen F. Graham Cancer Center

Staff

Participated

Helen Arthur– Delaware Division of Public Health

Participated

Lisa Moore – Delaware Division of Public Health

Participated

Sharon Richey -Delaware Division of Public Health

Participated

Sumitha Nagarajan – Delaware Division of Public Health

Participated

Dawn Hollinger – Delaware Division of Public Health

Participated

Paulette Robinson-Wilkerson – Delaware Division of Public Health

Participated

Lyra Gibbs-Lloyd – Delaware Division of Public Health

Participated

Lauren Butscher – Delaware Division of Public Health

Participated

Sarah Cattie – Delaware Division of Public Health

Participated

Jade Losh – Delaware Division of Public Health

Participated

Nick Vella - Delaware Division of Public Health

Participated

Nikita Clark - Delaware Division of Public Health

Did not Participate

Dale Goodine - Delaware Division of Public Health

Guests

Participated

Rita Williams – Beebe Healthcare

Participated

Lance Kilpatrick- American Cancer Society

Participated	Pam Schauer- American Cancer Society
Participated	Nora Katurakes - Christiana Care Health System
Participated	Brittany Williams – Black Girl Health Collective
Participated	Brian Richemier- Program Manager, Remedy Healthcare
Participated	Heather Bittner-Fagan – Christiana Care Health System

Welcome/Review/Approval of Minutes

Review/Approval of Minutes

Deborah Brown, Chair, began the Advisory Council meeting at 8:31 a.m. Deb announced the New Members for the Delaware Cancer Consortium Advisory Council and departing members from Delaware Cancer Consortium. Deb made a motion to approve January 2025 minutes as written and Tim Ratsep seconded the motion. Advisory Council members voted and approved the minutes.

Delaware Cancer Treatment Program (DCTP) Update

Dawn Hollinger, Cancer Prevention and Control Bureau Chief, presented an update on the Delaware Cancer Treatment Program (DCTP) as of June 30. Since the program's inception in 2004, a total of 2,163 Delaware residents have received assistance. In fiscal year (FY) 2025, 96 new applications were approved, an increase from 80 approvals in FY 2024. Of these, 72 were granted under the Financial Hardship Waiver, 8 under Temporary Eligibility, and 16 for Undocumented Residents. Currently, 134 residents are actively enrolled in the program within the standard two-year enrollment period. This includes 107 with a Financial Hardship Waiver, 2 with Temporary Eligibility, and 25 Undocumented Residents.

For FY 2025, \$2.7 million was allocated to the DCTP. This allocation includes funding for administrative support, such as \$180,723.77 for the Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance (DMMA) for claims management and \$147,000 for DMMA's administration of the breast and cervical cancer program for Medicaid recipients. Payment of DCTP claims is managed through a purchase order totaling \$1.8 million. Additional funds have been designated for special projects, support programs, and the development and implementation of cancer awareness campaigns. The total FY 2025 purchase order has already been exhausted. The average weekly payment for DCTP services in FY 2025 was \$53,011.89, which reflects a significant increase compared to the FY 2024 average of \$32,661.55 and the FY 2023 average of \$34,475.23. These trends highlight the growing financial demand and critical importance of maintaining and expanding cancer treatment access for Delaware residents.

Bureau of Cancer Prevention and Control Budget

Dawn Hollinger, Bureau Chief of the Cancer Prevention and Control Bureau, provided an update on the Bureau's recent activities, grant awards, and budget developments impacting cancer prevention and awareness initiatives.

The Bureau received the Notice of Award for all three components of its federal cancer grant. Notably, the Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program experienced a \$250,000 funding reduction less than the anticipated \$400,000 cut mitigating the initial projected impact on program operations.

In addition to federal funding updates, the Health Fund Advisory Committee has recommended a 35% reduction in funding for the Health Care Commission's Health Promotion and Awareness

Program for Fiscal Year 2026. This recommendation would reduce funding from \$585,000 in FY 2025 to \$380,500 in FY 2026, posing significant implications for future health education and outreach efforts.

Further compounding these funding challenges, the recently passed State budget bill includes targeted reductions to critical cancer-related initiatives. The Health Care Connection/Uninsured Action Plan has been reduced by \$205,000, while the HPV Vaccination Program will see a \$92,800 funding cut. These reductions may impact the Bureau's capacity to maintain current service levels and outreach, particularly for underserved populations.

Additionally, the Bureau is still awaiting feedback from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding a colorectal cancer grant application submitted in February. As of this report, no communication has been received, and it has been noted that other states are similarly awaiting updates, indicating a possible delay in the Centers for Disease Control grant award process.

These developments illustrate the growing financial pressures facing cancer prevention and control efforts in Delaware and underscore the continued need for strong advocacy and strategic resource planning to sustain public health programming statewide.

Small Area-Level Cancer Incidence Report

Cancer Epidemiologist Sumitha Nagarajan presented the Small Area Level Cancer Incidence in Delaware report for 2017–2021, offering detailed cancer statistics by census tract and introducing newly defined cancer reporting zones. The report is intended to support outreach efforts and program planning by illustrating cancer incidence patterns statewide. It includes all-site cancer data at the census tract level and site-specific data breast, prostate, lung, and colorectal cancers by reporting zone. Sumitha explained the methodology, data sources, and shared maps highlighting areas with elevated cancer rates.

Sumitha Nagarajan also provided updates on several ongoing initiatives, including legislative briefs that will deliver Delaware House districts concise snapshots of cancer statistics, risk factors, and available resources for constituents. Additional updates included upcoming reports on cancer incidence and mortality, as well as a new CDC visualization tool to compare cancer rates across states. Diane Ng is a senior Research Associate with Westat confirmed that mortality data by zone is currently in development. The council also discussed proposed changes to the Delaware Cancer Program regulations, including a six-month residency requirement and standardized documentation for application review.

Delaware Cancer Treatment Program Regulations

Dawn Hollinger Cancer Prevention and Control Bureau Chief led the Delaware Cancer Consortium (DCC) Advisory Council in a discussion on proposed updates to the Delaware Cancer Treatment Program (DCTP) regulations. Key recommendations included allowing residents to reapply for coverage if the same cancer persists or recurs within five years of the original two-year enrollment period, as well as expanding coverage to include genetic testing and at-home infusion services.

Dr. Rishi Sawhney, Bayhealth Medical Center expressed strong support for covering genetic testing, recognizing its vital role in guiding personalized treatment. However, there was cautious discussion around the inclusion of at-home infusion services, with concerns about safety, oversight, and potential cost implications. Dr. Thomas Scwaab, Medical Director Helen F. Graham

Cancer Center debated extending program eligibility beyond two years for individuals undergoing long-term treatment, acknowledging both the ethical responsibility to support patients and the program's budgetary limitations. Renitia Pulliam Nurse Supervisor - Oncology, Christiana Care recommended gathering additional data on how often extended coverage is needed before making a final decision.

Dawn Hollinger will formally introduce the proposed regulation changes and facilitate continued Advisory Council discussion and public input. Upon approval by the Advisory Council, the regulations will be submitted to DPH leadership for Deputy Attorney General review and then published in the Register of Regulations for public comment prior to implementation.

Burden of Patients Presenting to Hospital Emergency Rooms for Cancer Treatment

Dawn Hollinger Cancer Prevention and Control Bureau Chief Presented Concerned Raised by Dr. Petrelli, Christiana Care and Dr. Spellman Beebe Healthcare Tunnell Cancer Center regarding the significant costs incurred when cancer patients, particularly uninsured individuals. This including undocumented patients present to the hospital emergency departments seeking cancer treatment. Dr. Spellman emphasized that Christiana Care Health System expended approximately \$30 Million last year caring for this population, with 500 uninsured cancer patients presenting over the past six months alone.

The Delaware Cancer Consortium Advisory Council considered whether to bring this issue to the Delaware Health Care Commission for further discussion. Dr. Thomas Schwaab, Medical Director Helen F. Graham Cancer Center proposed the creation of a dedicated "lumps and Bumps" clinic to improve timely access and diagnostic workup for new cancer cases, addressing access barriers independently from payment challenges. It was agreed to research how other states manage similar challenges and to explore viable strategies to enhance care delivery for uninsured cancer patients in Delaware.

DCC Mission, Goals, and Objectives

Alex Parkowski, with Aloysius, Butler & Clark presented an overview of the Consortium's progress since its establishment in 2001, including notable achievements such as improved cancer mortality rates and increased screening efforts. The council reaffirmed its current focus on five priority cancers: colorectal, lung, breast, cervical, and prostate.

Comprising 15 governor-appointed members, the Advisory Council oversees three supporting committees and is dedicated to reducing cancer incidence and mortality, addressing health disparities, and advancing prevention and treatment initiatives. The meeting also included a demonstration of the DCC website and available member resources, including toolkits and campaign materials.

Discussions covered upcoming initiatives, future meeting dates, and plans for the annual retreat. Dr. Spellman provided historical context on the DCC's impact on cancer screening and disparity reduction in Delaware. Also Dr. Spellman and Dr. Petrelli have been with the Delaware Cancer Consortium since it was established in 2001.

2026 Delaware Cancer Consortium Dates

Dawn Hollinger Cancer Prevention and Control Bureau Chief, proposed 2026 Delaware Cancer Consortium Dates to the Advisory Council. The proposed dates: 1/12/26, 4/20/26 or 4/21/26 last year retreat was on a Tuesday, 7/13/26 and 10/12/26. Jade Losh, Administrative Specialist II will send a poll out to the Entire Delaware Cancer Consortium to vote on the Proposed 2026 dates.

Sharing Time

There were no Public Comments.

Public Comment

There were no Public Comments.

Adjournment

Chair, Deb Brown adjourned the meeting at 10:00 am after thanking all members and staff for participating.

Attachments



DCC Small
Area-Level Estimates

Meeting documentation is available on the DCC website (www.healthydelaware.org) or by contacting Jade Nagyiski (Jade.Nagyiski@delaware.gov or 302-744-1000).

Future Meeting(s)

Next Meeting: October 6th, 2025 - Hybrid	2025 meetings: January 13th, 2025 - Hybrid April 14th, 2025 - Hybrid July 14th, 2025 – In-person October 6th, 2025 - Hybrid
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