

2022 Annual Report

Catalyzing Cancer Control

Continuing
the Fight in a
New Normal



Moving forward in the battle against cancer

To Our Arkansas Cancer Coalition (ACC) Family:

The last couple of years have required copious amounts of flexibility, adaptation and innovation, as the world grappled with a pandemic and futures seemed uncertain. We at ACC are proud of the ways we rose to the challenges posed by that crisis. We remained steadfast in our determination to serve Arkansans, and we are invigorated by the prospect of moving forward in our effort to control cancer in our state.

In fiscal year 2022, as things returned to somewhat modified but still more familiar routines, we have embraced the lessons we learned throughout the pandemic experience and we are using them to propel us forward in our effort to prevent, screen for, treat and cure cancer, while keeping equity, growth and resilience top of mind. We are "Catalyzing Cancer Control: Continuing the Fight in a New Normal."

Every year, we search for new, evidence-based ways to reach people who may benefit from cancer prevention and screening services. This year, because we are aware that so many put routine medical care on hold as they navigated the Covid-19 pandemic, we made extra efforts to meet them where they were with information and services that could potentially save their lives.

We are excited to tell you that this year we made a difference by

- Awarding \$336,378 in large grants;
- Awarding \$9,500 in mini grants;
- Forging a partnership with St. Bernard's Medical Center in Jonesboro to extend our education outreach;
- Providing resources for 4,453 early detection and screening procedures, including mobile and in-clinic mammograms, FIT tests and colonoscopies, cervical screenings and low dose CT;
- Educating 3,268 patients and 901 healthcare providers about cancer prevention, screening and treatment; and
- Reaching more than 90,000 people with our outreach and awareness campaigns.

We sought to lessen the burdens shouldered by cancer patients and their families, as well, through partnerships with organizations like Goodness Village, which offers affordable accommodations as well as nurturing support for those seeking treatment in Little Rock. In all, we provided funding for 2,328 nights stay for cancer patients and caregivers this fiscal year.

We also provided

- Patient navigation and support for 96 patients
- Transportation for 396

Our passion for helping Arkansans who are at risk of cancer, who are cancer patients and who are cancer survivors is unwavering. We look forward to continuing that challenging but so very important work in the coming year.



Trena Mitchell
Trena Mitchell, MA, CNP
Executive Director



Louise Scott
Louise Scott, LSW
Board of Directors Chair

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MISSION statement

The Arkansas Cancer Coalition's mission is to facilitate and provide partnerships to reduce the human suffering and economic burden from cancer for the citizens of Arkansas. **Together we:**



Provide a current overview of cancer control in Arkansas



Strengthen and sustain the cancer control partnership and support network



Direct goals and strategies in the Arkansas Cancer Plan



Our Impact

In fiscal year 2022, as Arkansas and the rest of the world returned to a more normal level of operation two years into the Covid-19 pandemic, ACC trained its focus on revitalizing efforts to control the constant threat of cancer. Cancer remains the second leading cause of death in our state, and it is unrelenting in its approach, even when our attention is diverted by other crises. ACC's passion for cancer prevention and screening for Arkansans has been key from the beginning, and we know we must remain tenacious in our efforts. Many Arkansans have delayed routine healthcare appointments during the pandemic. In response, we have magnified our efforts to get everyone back on track, because research shows that early detection can save lives.

The financial, psychological and social costs associated with cancer are staggering. Cancer's effects on patients and families and on the communities where they live is beyond measure. That is why ACC has forged new partnerships, like the one with St. Bernard's Medical Center in Jonesboro that extends our education outreach to the furthest corners of the state. We have endeavored to fund as many partners as possible so that they, in turn, might address cancer control needs in the areas they serve. ACC awarded nearly \$350,000 in competitive and mini grants in the last fiscal year, supporting mobile mammography, tobacco cessation efforts, accommodations for cancer patients undergoing treatment and so much more.

Arkansas Cancer Coalition Community Impact

EARLY DETECTION & SCREENING



2,583
mammograms in clinics
or on Mammovans



863
cervical screenings



1,001
colonoscopies and FIT
tests completed



6
Low Dose
CT screening

EDUCATING HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS & THE PUBLIC



3,268
patients & public
members educated



901
healthcare providers
educated



300
surveys
completed

GRANT FUNDING TO SUPPORT CANCER CONTROL PROGRAMS



\$336,378
awarded in large
grants ranging from
\$35,000 to \$55,000

\$9,500
awarded in mini
grants ranging
up to \$3,500

LODGING FOR CANCER PATIENTS



2,328
nights of subsidized
lodging to 278
patients

PATIENT NAVIGATION & SUPPORT FOR CANCER PATIENTS



96
patients received patient
navigation services

TRANSPORTATION TO SCREENING OR TREATMENT



395
patients received gas cards to assist with
transportation to cancer treatment or
Low Dose CT screening

OUTREACH & AWARENESS



138
social media posts

64,209
on Facebook

1,711
on LinkedIn

3,295
on Twitter



19,000
reached via
a magazine ad



9
community
health events



3,715
educational materials
distributed



CRAIG WILSON
*Director of Health Policy
Arkansas Center for
Health Improvement*

Our Priorities



ACHI data led to improved access to colorectal cancer screening

The Arkansas Center for Health Improvement was instrumental in the passage of a 2021 law that makes colorectal cancer screenings available for younger Arkansans and eliminates out-of-pocket expenses that could discourage some people from follow-up care.

The Arkansas General Assembly passed Act 779 of 2021, lowering the age for covered colorectal screenings from 50 to 45. Act 779 also made it against

the law for most individual and group insurance policies – including those covering Medicaid expansion beneficiaries through the Arkansas Works program and state and public school employee health benefit plans – to require cost-sharing for follow-up colonoscopies after positive results from at-home tests.

The Covid-19 pandemic led to a decrease in preventive screenings, according to Craig Wilson, director of public policy with the Arkansas Center for Health Improvement.

“We don’t have numbers yet but we have to assume that there are still a lot of people who have delayed care and have forgotten their wellness visits,” says Wilson. “We will see probably in the next year if we’re back up to where we were before.”

At-home screening is not enough to raise rates

Colorectal cancer screening rates for Arkansans were low even before the pandemic. In 2018, more than 33 percent of Arkansans 50 -75 failed to get screened for colorectal cancer as recommended by the U.S.

Preventive Services Task Force, according to Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The ease and convenience of non-invasive at-home colorectal cancer screenings, like the fecal immunochemical test (FIT), have probably increased the likelihood that some people will adhere to screening guidelines, but colorectal screening rates remain lower than those for breast and cervical cancers in spite of the accessibility.

“If you receive a positive screen, you really need to get a colonoscopy,” says Wilson.

Last year, ACHI teamed up with national non-profit advocacy group Fight Colorectal Cancer to prepare a report examining the prevalence of colorectal screening in our state and to look at gaps in accessibility to those screenings. According to that report, 60 percent of the patients who had positive results from at-home screening and then followed up with colonoscopy as recommended had out-of-pocket expenses related to those procedures.

“While the Affordable Care Act back in 2014 required no cost-sharing for preventive screenings, colorectal cancer being one of

► **The Arkansas General Assembly passed Act 779 of 2021, lowering the age for covered colorectal screenings from 50 to 45. Act 779 also made it against the law for most individual and group insurance policies - including those covering Medicaid expansion beneficiaries through the Arkansas Works program and state and public school employee health benefit plans - to require cost-sharing for follow-up colonoscopies after positive results from at-home tests.**

those, there were some issues with follow-up colonoscopies after a positive screen, for those individuals having surprise bills,” says Wilson. “For a lot of people that can be burdensome enough for them not to go and have that follow-up colonoscopy.”



Colorectal cancer will cause about 500 Arkansas deaths this year

Colorectal cancer is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer among both men and women in Arkansas as well as in the United States. The American Cancer Society estimated that 1,500 would be diagnosed with colorectal cancer in 2021, and 500 Arkansans would die of the disease that same year.

In Arkansas, the incidence rate of colorectal cancer between 2013 and 2017 was 44.1 per 100,000, well above the U.S. rate of 38.4 per 100,000.

“At Arkansas Center for Health Improvement we’re really good about digging down into the data, then contextualizing that data and making it Arkansas-specific and turning it into a story that makes sense to policymakers,” says Wilson.

In that vein, ACHI’s research with Fight Colorectal Cancer offered an examination of specifically how Arkansans were affected by cost-sharing.

“This really kind of gives an Arkansas story about the number of people who are facing these cost-sharing barriers,” says Wilson, “and if we close these cost-sharing barriers by requiring insurance companies to not have cost-sharing for the follow-up colonoscopy, how many people could we help?”

“

“We want to continue to look at taxes on tobacco, and really think about some taxation on vaping products, as well, because that’s a gateway for a lot of young folks.”

**CRAIG WILSON, DIRECTOR OF HEALTH POLICY,
ARKANSAS CENTER FOR HEALTH IMPROVEMENT**

ACHI data benefits people in Arkansas and beyond

A few years ago, ACHI evaluated and updated costs of tobacco-related illnesses for the state Medicaid program and private insurers.

“We noticed that some of the estimates that had been published before were relying upon survey-based information and that it was quite dated,” says Wilson.

ACHI houses information about tobacco-related disease claims, which was used to quantify related costs more accurately than what could be calculated based on survey-based information.

“That was part of the effort to get the National Cancer Institute designation for the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, but we want to continue to look at taxes on tobacco, and really think about some taxation on vaping products, as well, because that’s a gateway for a lot of young folks,” says Wilson.

ACHI’s work often does not stop with benefits to Arkansans, however.

ACHI worked with the national group Fight Colorectal Cancer to make its methodology and even the program coding available to other states.

“We gave them a blueprint or a roadmap so the other states could do a similar analysis,” says Wilson, “and turn it into something in their own state.”





Our Partners



Goodness Village offers comfort for cancer patients

Goodness Village offers patients and families a comfortable home away from home as they undergo medical treatment, often for months at a time and hundreds of miles from where they live.

Goodness Village Executive Director Kim Burket and her staff try to keep the costs for patient accommodations low, because they know that medical care can be costly, and that bills for childcare, mortgages, utilities and more don't stop when someone becomes ill.

"Arkansas Cancer Coalition helped us provide, last year, \$73,000 for scholarship funds to assist families," says Burket. "And this year we have already hit \$74,000."

Goodness Village gained non-profit 501 (c)(3) status in 2020, after operating for more than 25 years as Home Away from Home, a ministry of the Little Rock Church. It was started by two women who made one apartment available for multiple myeloma patients who were to be in Little Rock for weeks at a time.

Burket worked with Home Away from Home for more than a decade before seeking non-profit status for Goodness Village. Burket was one of two staff members who did everything from answering phones and making arrangements for patient stays to cleaning apartments before and after people stayed.

“

“Arkansas Cancer Coalition helped us provide, last year, \$73,000 for scholarship funds to assist families. And this year we have already hit \$74,000.”

KIM BURKET
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
GOODNESS VILLAGE



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Each one is fully furnished, and stocked, down to the laundry detergent, fabric softener and other household supplies that are replenished regularly, healthy snacks and freezer meals and games, books and puzzles for distraction during down time.

“I love that it didn’t start off fresh and beautiful,” says Burket of the organization. “When it started in 1995, it was used furniture – like if someone had an extra chair or couch or pictures, all of those things were put together to make a home.”

Burket and her staff updated the apartments using donations and the help of a volunteer with design expertise, turning them into havens for caregivers and patients, who often arrive burdened by worries and feeling unwell.

Getting the final stamp of approval for non-profit status just as the Covid-19 pandemic began was not the best timing for Burket and her staff as they tried to find support and get the word out about their metamorphosis. However, Goodness Village was well positioned to benefit patients, many of whom needed extra protection from exposure to germs as they continued their cancer treatments.

“During the pandemic, we were able to keep the families together where they could cook their meals and do their laundry and they were touching one doorknob to get into the apartments,” says Burket. “Last year, we served over 150 families, from over 25 states, and we are truly a home setting, where they can have their own space.”

“I look back and I wonder how in the world I did all that, but it’s really given me a good understanding of what it all takes for the front-line work – encouraging the patients, visiting with the patients,” she says. “It’s not just, ‘Here’s an apartment, good luck to you.’”

Homes helped cancer patients stay safer through the pandemic

There are 12 staff members and a seven-member Goodness Village board, doing whatever it takes to ease the burden on patients and their families and caregivers.

Goodness Village has 20 apartments, some in Park Avenue Lofts in the city’s midtown and some in Palisades at Chenal Valley in west Little Rock.

► **Goodness Village offers patients and families a comfortable home away from home as they undergo medical treatment, often for months at a time and hundreds of miles from where they live.**

Village of volunteers support patients and families

Burket's ultimate goal is to have a true village – apartments or cottages huddled together in a Goodness Village community, complete with a chapel, support group meeting space, a yoga studio and a healing garden, full of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Burket and her staff value support for Goodness Village that allows them to help patients as they go through treatment. With grants and donations, the organization can offer patients lodging for just \$30-50 a night.

“That’s a good illustration of how Arkansas Cancer Coalition has helped us impact cancer patients in Arkansas,” she says. “I hope that someday it’s free.”

She and her staff also appreciate the volunteers who offer their time to help with the Goodness Village mission. They are diligent about looking for each volunteer’s unique skills and interests, like cooking, creating artwork, writing encouraging notes or cleaning.

▶ **With grants and donations, the organization can offer patients lodging for just \$30-50 a night.**



“Each one has a different skill or trade or things they love to do, but we can put those gifts to work in just about any place within the mission,” says Burket.

The goal, she says, is to create the most inviting apartments and to take care of as many of the patients’ and caregivers’ concerns as possible, so they can focus on their health and recovery.

“I always try to put myself in the patients’ and families’ shoes, to think about, ‘How would it feel to be whisked away from your life as you know it, and be whisked across the state – to a different country, sometimes?’” says Burket. “We get to be an extension of these families, and we do all sorts of things for them. It’s just really an unbelievable organization that I feel very honored to be a part of.”





88%

percentage of attendees that said the information would improve their abilities to communicate with patients

82%

percentage of attendees that said the information would improve their abilities to treat or manage patients and improve their clinical practice

41

healthcare provider attendees

Our Programs

ACC partners with St. Bernards Medical Center to enhance tobacco control education

ACC’s outreach and educational mission takes various shapes, from visits with Arkansas State Fair-goers, participants in community festivals and community action program attendees to hosting healthcare worker trainings and policy roundtables.

ACC has a long, successful history of working with St. Bernards Medical Center in Jonesboro to support multiple projects that promote cancer screenings. In the spring of 2022, we expanded that partnership with tobacco control educational opportunities for healthcare providers through the St. Bernard’s Lung Symposium. The symposium featured sessions on low dose CT screening, smoking cessation, surgical intervention and other treatment options. Forty-one healthcare providers attended, either in-person or virtually. Of the attendees surveyed, 88 percent said the information they took from the symposium would improve their abilities to communicate with patients and 82 percent said what they learned through the event would improve their abilities to treat or manage patients and improve their clinical practice.

Grants bolster work of partners around the state

Cancer is one of the most expensive diseases to diagnose and treat, burdening patients, their families and communities with immeasurable costs. This is why ACC strives to fund as many partners as possible. In the past 13 years, ACC has awarded \$4.3 million in competitive grants to 31 organizations – an average of \$46,076 each.

Another \$357,000 in mini grants averaging \$2,302 each was awarded to 74 organizations in the past 12 years. In fiscal year 2022, ACC provided mini grants totaling \$9,500 to organizations promoting skin cancer and colorectal cancer awareness and prevention and helping cancer patients access treatment. During that time, awards of \$336,378 in competitive grants from ACC allowed organizations around the state to offer prevention and early detection services, including mobile mammography that can serve Arkansans in areas where access to screening is lacking, accommodations for cancer patients receiving treatment far from home and smoking cessation services.

Awarded Competitive Grants

Organization Name	Program Title	Cancer Focus Area	ACC Funding Amount Provided
CARTI Foundation	Increasing Survivorship by Assisting Cancer Patients Access Care	Survivorship	\$54,500.00
Mainline Health Systems, Inc.	Prevention & Early Detection	Prevention (Breast, Cervical, Colorectal Cancer)	\$55,000.00
St. Bernards Development Foundation	Mobile Mammography - Increasing Screening Mammography & Breast Health Education	Breast Cancer	\$44,884.71
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences	Promoting Lung Cancer Screening/ Tobacco Cessation Outreach through the UAMS MammoVan & COVID-19 Mobile Unit	Lung Cancer	\$51,308.37
Home for Healing	Housing for Cancer Patients Receiving Treatment in Little Rock	Survivorship	\$35,000.00
Goodness Village	Housing and Hope for Cancer Patients & Survivors	Survivorship	\$40,685.00
Arkansas Immunization Action Coalition	HPV Vaccine Acceptance & Awareness	Cervical Cancer	\$55,000.00
FY22 Total Competitive Grant Funding Provided			\$336,378.08

Awarded Mini Grants

Organization Name	Program Title	Cancer Focus Area	ACC Funding Amount Provided
Reynolds Cancer Support House	Sun SMART Skin Cancer Awareness Program	Skin Cancer	\$3,500.00
Reynolds Cancer Support House	Access to Treatment Survivorship	Survivorship	\$1,750.00
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences	45 is the new FIT-ty	Colorectal Cancer	\$2,500.00
Washington Regional Cancer Support House	Cancer Support Home – Emergency Transportation Assistance	Survivorship	\$1,750.00
FY22 Total Mini Grant Funding Provided			\$9,500.00



Our Operations

Arkansas Cancer Coalition Board of Directors

Louise Scott, LSW (Chair)

Arkansas Department of Human Services

Marian S. Evans, DrPH (Vice-Chair)

University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

Krista Kirksey Thomas (Treasurer)

American Cancer Society

Sarah Faitak, RN (Secretary)

Breast Center of Northwest Arkansas

Abby Holt, MPH, MLIS

ICF International

Chris Collier

Arkansas Prostate Cancer Foundation

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University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

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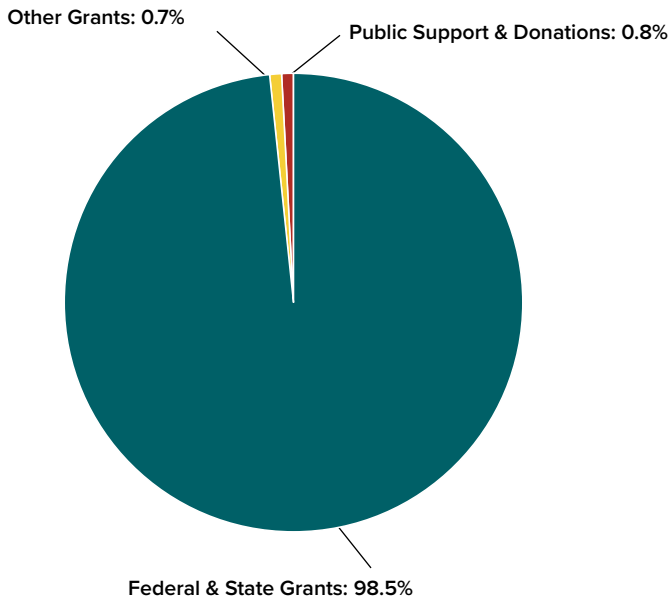
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Financial Overview

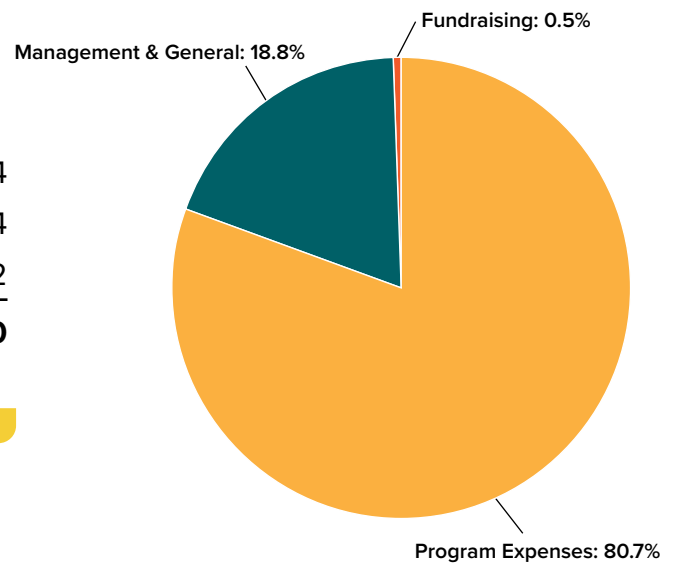
Revenue & Other Support



Federal & State Grants	\$1,050,400
Other Grants	\$7,000
Public Support & Donations	\$8,079
Total Revenue	\$1,065,479

Expenses




Program Expenses	\$857,534
Management & General	\$199,814
Fundraising	\$4,712
Total Expenses	\$1,062,060



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