



## Next Steps Based on New Cancer Data

May 2010

- 1.) By July 30, 2010, Delaware's Division of Public Health (DPH) will complete cancer cluster investigations for each of the 45 census tracts in which the all-site cancer incidence rate is higher than the state average. These analyses include statistical evaluation of each of the 45 census tracts, analyzing variables that may give more insight (such as cancer type, patient age, race, sex, time trends). The goal of the analyses is to determine if there are patterns of cancer incidence that might suggest a common cause (e.g., if rare cancers are occurring in populations and/or age groups not usually affected by these cancers). These analyses will include obtaining input from the Delaware Cancer Consortium's data committee on the structure of the report, implications and path forward.
- 2.) Beginning in July 2010, DPH will invite communities to find out more about cancer rates, risks and prevention methods by holding public meetings on request. DPH encourages community leaders and individual residents to contact DPH staff at 302-744-1040 to request the forum that would best meet the needs of each community. DPH will also coordinate the involvement of other state government departments to address each community's needs and questions.
- 3.) By September 2010, DPH will conduct further analyses of the increase in incidence of uterine, urinary bladder and thyroid cancers in Delaware. Both the rates of increase and the overall incidence rates for these cancers are significantly higher than in the nation. Further investigation is needed to determine if any contributing factors can be identified. As in the census tract investigations, the goal of the analyses will be to determine if there are patterns or similarities that might suggest a common cause for the increase.
- 4.) By September 2010, DPH staff will develop and implement specific outreach activities for each census tract with elevated incidence rates. Targeted activities will be based on the types of cancer occurring at elevated levels. DPH will consult with the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) regarding possible environmental contaminants affecting residents and current data related to behaviors that can reduce the risk of getting cancer. In addition, DPH will continue to provide services related to, and inform the public of, the importance of cancer prevention, early detection and treatment. Delaware's cancer prevention, early detection and treatment program is among the most comprehensive in the nation, and DPH is committed to assuring that Delawareans fully access these services.
- 5.) DPH will continue to support and carry out the recommendations of the Delaware Cancer Consortium, an organization recognized throughout the country for its innovative and effective approach to leading statewide cancer control activities.
- 6.) Delaware Health and Social Services and DPH remain committed to securing funding for and carrying out a statewide multi-media exposure study to determine which chemicals are present in our air, our water, our soil and our bodies. Once that information is gathered, Delaware can base policy and personal decisions about limiting exposure to carcinogens on actual in-state data about Delawareans.
- 7.) The risk of getting the five most frequently diagnosed cancers in Delaware is largely within our individual control. In accordance with the Governor's priorities of promoting and supporting healthy lifestyles that reduce the risk of getting cancer and other chronic illnesses, DPH will, with partners, continue and expand programming to prevent tobacco use and promote physical activity, healthy eating and other healthy choices in Delaware.