



April 2009 Update

VTAAC provides a forum for collaboration, engagement and sharing of resources for individuals and organizations concerned about cancer in Vermont.

Welcome!

This is the eleventh edition of our quarterly newsletter. We are presenting this update to the many members of our coalition to provide news, plans and other information. If you have any questions or information to be shared, please contact our editor, **David Cranmer** <david.cranmer@cancer.org>, 802-872-6303.

VTAAC Annual Meeting A Success

On Friday, April 3rd, VTAAC held its third annual meeting at the Capitol Plaza in Montpelier. Over 50 attendees enjoyed panel presentations in the morning and an interactive discussion on planning for the State Cancer Plan in the afternoon.

“Successful Screening Initiatives in Vermont” was moderated by **Dennis Sanders, MD**, Co-chair of the VTAAC Colon Cancer Workgroup. **Emily Blistein**, with the Hicks’ Foundation spoke on their free screening days project that reached 55 underserved women in three communities. **Berta Geller, Ed.D.** researcher with the University of Vermont presented data collected on the colon screening collaborative project where health insurers sent letters to subscribers reminding them to ask their doctor about colon screening, resulting in a 19% increase in screening of insured Vermonters aged 50-64. **Jon Bourgo**, with the Community Health Center Burlington shared the results of their refugee outreach program, using translators and special screening days to reach over 80 underserved refugee and minority women in 2008.

“Collaborating with ACoS Commission on Cancer Centers” was delivered by **Simon Drew, MD**, Southwest Vermont Medical Center. Dr. Drew is the Vermont Liaison Chair for the American College of Surgeons (ACoS). His presentation shared the history of the Commission on Cancer and the work being done to improve quality of care at their accredited centers. Following his presentation, **Rick Lovett, MD** gave an update on the RRMC Cancer Committee; **George Philips, MD** and **Ann Gray**, Cancer Registrar, gave an update on the FAHC cancer committee; and **Dennis Sanders, MD** spoke on behalf of the NWMC cancer committee.

At lunch, VTAAC Coordinator **David Cranmer** was recognized for his 5 years of service in the development and implementation of the Vermont State Cancer Plan. Following lunch, **Allison Hicks**, cancer survivor and founder of the Hicks’ Foundation shared her story and spoke on setting goals, staying focused and overcoming challenges.

VTAAC Annual Meeting (Continued)

“*Planning the Plan*” was the afternoon program facilitated by **John Olson**, VDH Comprehensive Cancer Control Program and **Liz Peterson**, VDH Epidemiologist. John shared background on the current plan and Liz gave a presentation on using the data available from the Department. This was followed by a brainstorming session on what should be included in the new plan.

Our thanks to the Vermont Department of Health for their financial support of the meeting and to the Annual Meeting Committee: **Susan Cleary, David Cranmer, Debbie Dameron, Penrose Jackson, and John Olson** for presenting a well-organized, information-filled day.

“Living With Cancer In Vermont” Released

The Vermont Department of Health (VDH) announced the release of its latest in a series of documents on cancer. “*Living With Cancer in Vermont*” is a comprehensive 27 page document created for Vermont cancer survivors and those who take care of them.

Included are topics on the Survivorship Continuum: Pre-Diagnosis, Diagnosis, Treatment, Post Treatment, Remission, Recurrence and End of Life Care. Also included are several pages of resources for cancer survivors.

“*Living With Cancer in Vermont*” is now available on-line by visiting:

<http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/cancer/documents/SurvivorshipinVT2000-2004040209.pdf>

May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month

Each year over 160 Vermonters are diagnosed with Melanoma. Most cases are a result of sun exposure. Here are some smart sun care tips provided by the makers of Coppertone®.

- As part of a total sun protection program, use sunscreens that protect against both UVB and UVA rays. Look for products that contain broad-spectrum ingredients such as avobenzone or zinc oxide.
- Even on cloudy days, 80 percent of the sun's rays can penetrate through the clouds, causing sunburn, so it's important to use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher every day.
- Remember to apply sunscreen to sensitive areas prone to sunburn, including ears, nose neck and hands. Of those surveyed, only 26 percent apply sunscreen to ears and 18 percent to lips.
- Apply sunscreen even when you're under a beach umbrella. The rays can reflect off sand and other reflective surfaces such as concrete and water.
- Risk for UV exposure is greatest when the sun is at its highest in the sky (between 10 am and 2 pm) and less in the early morning and late afternoon.

For more information: <http://www.sunsafetyalliance.org/>

Vermont State Cancer Plan 2008 Activities Report Released

This annual report outlines the activities that were conducted last year in all of the objective areas of the Vermont State Cancer Plan. The report is available at www.vtaac.org; look in the publications box on the right hand side of the home page.

Get Ready for Relay!

June means longer days and the start of summer in Vermont. It also brings us the opportunity to “Celebrate, Remember and Fight Back” with the American Cancer Society’s *Relay For Life*. Relay is a fun-filled overnight event designed to celebrate survivorship and raise money for research and the programs of ACS. During the event, teams of people gather at schools, fairgrounds, or parks and take turns walking or running laps. Each team keeps at least one team member on the track at all times.

In March the nation’s only winter Relay was held with snow shoes and cross country skis in Stowe. In April, Relays are held on the campuses of the University of Vermont, Middlebury College, Norwich University and Castleton State College.

Coming up, there will be ten Relays For Life held in Vermont:

- **Relay For Life of Middlebury College Relay (Addison County)**
Middlebury, May 1 starting at 6 pm
- **Relay For Life of Franklin County**
Franklin County Field Days, Highgate, May 30 starting at 4pm
- **Relay For Life of Caledonia County**
St. Johnsbury Academy, St. Johnsbury, June 13 starting at 4 pm
- **Relay For Life of Chittenden County**
Champlain Valley Exposition, Essex Junction, June 19 starting at 6 pm
- **Relay For Life of Windsor County (Woodstock)**
Woodstock Union High School, Woodstock, June 19 starting at 6 pm
- **Relay For Life of North East Kingdom (Orleans County)**
North Country Union HS, Newport, June 20 starting at 6 pm
- **Relay For Life of Central Vermont (Washington County)**
Montpelier High School, Montpelier, June 26 starting at 6 pm
- **Relay For Life of Windham County (Brattleboro)**
Brattleboro Union HS, Brattleboro, June 26 starting at 6 pm
- **Relay For Life of Bennington County**
Mt. Anthony Union High School, Bennington, June 27 starting at 6pm
- **Relay For Life of Rutland County**
C.V.P.S., Rutland, June 27 starting at 3 pm

For more information, go to: <http://www.relayforlife.org/relay/>



Vermont Cancer Plan Status Report Updated for 2009

The *Cancer Plan Status Report*, generated by **Liz Peterson** at the Department of Health, measures the state's progress in reaching the 36 objectives in the Vermont State Cancer Plan. The March 2009 Report has included 2008 data where available and compares this to baseline data and our 2010 goals. A copy of the report is available on our web page: www.vtaac.org. Look under publications on the right side of the page.

Timeline for Vermont State Cancer Plan 2011-2015

At the VTAAC Annual Meeting John Olson presented the following timeline for developing and publishing the new State Cancer Plan.

- **Spring 2009**
 - Generate ideas
 - Invite new partners
 - Form working groups
 - Research data and indicators
- **Summer & Fall 2009**
 - Workgroups meet (with VDH)
 - Develop possible new goals, objectives & strategies
- **Winter & Spring 2010**
 - Write preliminary draft of Plan
 - Workgroups identify activities, resources, data & partner needs
- **Summer 2010**
 - Final draft of Plan written
 - Workgroups prioritize activities
- **Fall 2010**
 - Plan approval by VDH & VTAAC
 - Publication to websites
 - Resource requests from workgroups for CDC grant(s)
- **Winter 2011**
 - CDC Grant Application(s) for 2011-15

To see elements of the current Plan, visit www.vtaac.org. Each section of the Plan is listed under "VTAAC Pages - Priority Areas".

Telephone Workshops for Cancer Survivors

CancerCare offers free Telephone Education Workshops as a way for people to learn about cancer-related issues from the convenience of their home or office. Leading experts in oncology provide the most up-to-date information. Participation is free. Upcoming topics include workshops on Hodgkin Lymphoma, Glioblastoma, Dental Health, Breast Cancer, Lung Cancer, and Managing Rash & Dry Skin. Scheduled *CancerCare* telephone workshops are listed at www.vtaac.org, click on the "VTAAC Calendar" on the right side of the home page. Complete information and directions on how to register are available at *CancerCare*, 1-800-813-HOPE, or www.cancercare.org.

The Cost of Doing Nothing through the Cancer Lens

From the American Cancer Society's Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)

Inadequate access to timely, quality health care is one of the greatest barriers to winning the war on cancer. Individuals and families who lack meaningful insurance often go without preventive care despite research showing that early detection and timely treatment are effective in improving outcomes. Those who are uninsured and underinsured are less likely to receive cancer prevention services, more likely to be treated for cancer at late stages of disease, more likely to receive substandard care and services, and more likely to die from cancer.

- Uninsured women diagnosed with breast cancer are 2.5 times more likely to have a late stage diagnosis than women enrolled in private health insurance.
- Privately insured patients diagnosed with Stage II colorectal cancer were more likely to survive 5 years than uninsured patients diagnosed with Stage I cancer.
- More than 1 in 5 patients and families who were *insured* during their fight with cancer used up all or most of their savings and 3% of those insured declared bankruptcy as a result of their cancer.

As part of broader health care reform, ACS CAN is advocating for health insurance that is available, adequate, affordable, and administratively simple for Americans without regard to health status or risk

What does this mean to Vermont?

Vermont's uninsured and under-insured

- 1 in 8 non-elderly people in Vermont are uninsured.
- Between 2000 and 2006, more than 200 working-age adults from Vermont died because they were uninsured.
- 1 in 4 non-elderly *insured* people in Vermont live in households that spend more than 10% of their income of health care costs.

The rising cost of coverage in Vermont

- Health insurance costs are rising and fewer employers are offering coverage leading to more uninsured.
- 1 in 4 non-elderly people in Vermont live in households that spend more than a tenth of their income of health care costs, threatening their financial well-being. This number increased by 56% between 2000 and 2008.
- Not only are health insurance premiums increasing, deductibles and co-pays are on the rise. By 2016, the average co-pay will increase 41% and the average deductible will nearly triple in Vermont.

Being uninsured creates barriers to care and impacts cancer outcomes, for example

- 2 in 5 *uninsured* adults in Vermont reported they were unable to see a doctor in the last 12 months when they needed care because of cost.
- Nearly 1 in 12 *insured* adults in Vermont reported they were unable to see a doctor in the last 12 months when they needed care because of cost.

The Cost of Doing Nothing (continued)

- 2 in 5 uninsured women in Vermont between age 40 and 64 did not have a mammogram in the past two years compared to about one quarter of those insured.
- 7 in 10 uninsured adults in Vermont between age 50 and 64 had not had a colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy compared to more than 4 in 10 of those insured.

For more information, visit <http://acscan.org/action/vt>

2009 VTAAC Meeting Schedule

May 8 – Steering Committee
May 21 – Cervical Cancer Workgroup
June 19 – Executive Committee
July 10 – Steering Committee
July 30 – Cervical Cancer Committee
August 14 – Executive Committee
September 11 – Steering Committee
October 9 – Executive Committee
November 12 – Cervical Cancer Workgroup
November 13 – Steering Committee
December 11 – Executive Committee

Check the VTAAC Web Site, www.vtaac.org for details.

Every Vermonter Can Take Action Against Cancer!

- Avoid all tobacco products and second-hand smoke.
- Support smoke-free environments
- Eat a nutritious and balanced diet and maintain a healthy weight.
- Increase your daily physical activity.
- Have your home checked for radon gas.
- Talk to your health care provider about appropriate cancer screenings.
- Volunteer with your hospital, health department, faith community or local groups that support cancer control efforts.

Save the Dates

- **Head & Neck Cancer Awareness Day**
Norris Cotton North, St. Johnsbury, VT – Wednesday, April 29, 2009 – 4pm
800-639-6918
- **Stowe Weekend of Hope**
Stoweflake, Stowe, VT – Friday-Sunday, May 1-3, 2009
www.stowehope.org
- **Melanoma Awareness Day**
Norris Cotton Cancer Center, DHMC, Lebanon, NH – Thursday, May 21, 2009, 4pm
800-639-6918
- **National Cancer Survivor Day Celebrations**
Norris Cotton Cancer Center, DHMC, Lebanon, NH – Sunday, May 31, 2009, 1pm.
603-650-5449
RRMC, South Station Restaurant, Rutland, VT – Friday, June 5, 2009 – Noon
802-775-7111
SWVT Cancer Center, Bennington, VT – Friday, June 5, 2009 – 3pm
www.ncsdf.org
- **Highlights of the 2009 ASCO Annual Meeting**
Presented by the Vermont Cancer Center
Sheraton Conference Center, Burlington, VT – Friday, June 19, 2009 – 7:30am
<http://cme.uvm.edu>

May is

National Oncology Nurses Month
National Skin Cancer Detection & Prevention Month

June is

National Cancer Survivor Celebrations

July is

National Sarcoma Awareness Month
National UV Safety Month

Upcoming VTAAC Meetings

Executive Committee

Friday, June 19, 2009 – 1:00pm – Site: TBD

Steering Committee

Friday, May 8 – 1:00pm-3:00pm – ACS Williston

Cervical Cancer Workgroup

Thursday, May 21, 2009 – 1:30pm-3:00pm – ACS Williston

[Click Here to see the VTAAC Calendar](#)