

Progress Against Cancer

(NAPSA)—Significant advances against cancer have resulted in a steadily declining cancer death rate for Americans over the past 25 years, according to the seventh annual American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Cancer Progress Report.

The 2017 report, which provides an overview of the latest advances in cancer research, prevention and treatment, calls for robust government funding of biomedical research so that the research community can continue to make progress against cancer.

“This is an incredibly exciting time for the cancer community,” said Margaret Foti, Ph.D., M.D. (hc), chief executive officer of the AACR. “Research has fueled advances across the continuum of cancer care that are saving lives around the world, and we have the scientific knowledge and capability to deliver more lifesaving progress in the future.”

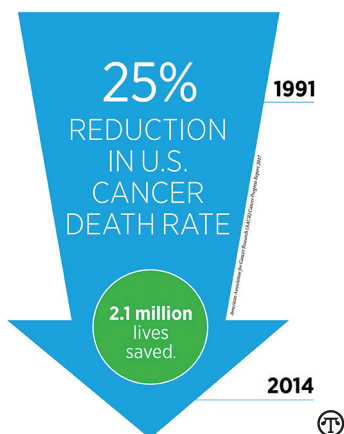
According to the report, the U.S. cancer death rate declined by 25 percent between 1991 and 2014. The cancer death rate for children declined by 35 percent during the same time.

Numerous factors have contributed to improved survival, including earlier detection and many new treatment options. In the past year alone, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved nine new anticancer drugs. Also, it expanded approval of eight previously approved drugs, allowing them to be used to treat additional types of cancer.

One of the approvals was for a drug for patients with any type of solid tumor containing a certain biomarker or genetic feature. All previous approvals had been based on the location of cancer in the body. The drug, Keytruda (pembrolizumab), is an immunotherapeutic that has brought significant benefit to many patients, including former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

AACR leaders cautioned that while new drug approvals and improving survival rates are signs of tremendous progress against cancer, there is still much work to be done. More than 600,920 people in the United States are projected to die from cancer in 2017, and the number of new cases of cancer in the United States is predicted to rise from 1.7 million in 2017 to 2.3 million in 2030.

“Cancer continues to exert an immense personal and economic toll,” the authors wrote, adding that the burden is



Researchers have found new ways to combat cancer.

shouldered disproportionately by certain segments of the population, including racial and ethnic minorities, patients of lower socioeconomic status, residents of certain geographic locations, and the elderly. This gap, known as a health disparity, is an area of growing research.

To accelerate the pace of progress against cancer, the report calls for the United States government to support federal research funding for organizations including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the FDA. Specifically, the report asks Congress to increase the NIH budget by \$2 billion to \$36.2 billion in fiscal year 2018 and the FDA budget by \$80 million to \$2.8 billion.

The Beau Biden Cancer Moonshot, an initiative launched by former Vice President Joe Biden with the guidance of numerous AACR leaders, must also receive support as it takes aim at reducing the nation's burden of cancer, the report said.

“As research has taught us more about the biology of cancer, we have been able to make incredible advances in cancer prevention and treatment that are saving lives today,” said Michael A. Caligiuri, M.D., president of the AACR and chief executive officer of the Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute in Columbus, Ohio. “The opportunity to make more transformational breakthroughs will require a strong federal commitment to providing consistent, annual, above-inflation increases in the budgets for the NIH, NCI and FDA.”