

Working Together Locally to Control Cancer

Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalitions and the Commission on Cancer

This is a guide on how Comprehensive Cancer Control (CCC) CDC state funded programs and their affiliated CCC coalitions can meaningfully engage with their American College of Surgeons (ACOS) Commission on Cancer (CoC) State Chairs. This guide includes an overview of the ACOS CoC, the role of the CoC and their State Chairs, and also describes how CCC programs and coalitions can work with the CoC State Chairs. For questions, please contact CoC staff Melissa Leeb mleeb@facs.org or Danielle Lopez dlopez@facs.org.

Commission on Cancer Overview

Mission

The Commission on Cancer (CoC) is a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to improving survival and quality of life for cancer patients through standard setting, prevention, research, education, and the monitoring of comprehensive quality care.

History

Established by the American College of Surgeons (ACS) in 1922, the CoC establishes standards to ensure quality, multidisciplinary, and comprehensive cancer care delivery in health care settings; conducts surveys in health care settings to assess compliance with those standards; collects standardized data from CoC-accredited health care settings to measure cancer care quality; uses data to monitor treatment patterns and outcomes, as well as enhance cancer control and clinical surveillance activities; and develops effective educational interventions to improve cancer prevention, early detection, cancer care delivery, and outcomes in health care settings.

[CoC Member Organizations](#) include administrative, patient-focused, allied health, clinical, governmental, registry, and research/education organizations.

CoC Cancer Liaison Program

Established in 1963, the Cancer Liaison Program of the Commission on Cancer was developed as a grassroots network of physician volunteers willing to manage clinically related cancer activities in their local institutions and surrounding communities. The Cancer Liaison Program is composed of a network of 1,500 Cancer Liaison Physicians (CLP) and 64 CoC State Chairs who provide leadership to the CLPs in their state or region.

CoC State Chair Responsibilities

State Chairs are American College of Surgeons Fellows, or those applying for Fellowship, that serve as representatives of the Commission on Cancer (CoC) by providing leadership and support to CoC-accredited programs and Cancer Liaison Physicians (CLPs) in their state or region. CoC State Chairs serve a three-year term and can be reappointed based on performance. They are collaborators, innovators, and experts working with cancer programs, cancer professionals, the American Cancer Society and **comprehensive cancer control coalitions** to improve the quality of cancer care in their state or region.

State Chairs are expected to **communicate regularly with Cancer Liaison Physicians** in CoC-accredited cancer programs in their state or region. Some of the topics the State Chairs communicate on include; activities of the CoC, cancer-related advocacy issues, comprehensive cancer control coalition activities and dissemination of new cancer specific guidelines or landmark clinical trial results.

State Chairs are also expected to participate in collaborative efforts including their state's **comprehensive cancer control coalition** and encourage CLP and CoC-accredited cancer program involvement in implementation activities of the state cancer plan.

How to Engage a CoC State Chair in a CCC Coalition

Is your CoC State Chair a member of your CCC Coalition?

- Identify the CoC State Chair in your state. A list of [Cancer State Chairs](#) is available on the CoC website.
- If your CoC State Chair is not part of your coalition, you can initiate a connection by one or a combination of methods:

- Contact your representative at the American Cancer Society. They will know your state's CoC chair and can initiate a conversation with you and the State Chair about the CCC Coalitions, it's efforts and how the State Chair can be involved.
- Ask coalition leadership or members if they know the State Chair. If so, they can initiate a conversation with you and the State Chair.
- Call or send an email to the State Chair directly asking to talk with them about the CCC Coalition and how they can become involved.
- See below for ideas about talking points for this initial conversation.

Talking Points with CoC State Chairs

Provide Background Information

“What is CCC?”

Comprehensive Cancer Control (CCC) is a collaborative process through which a community pools resources to reduce the burden of cancer; resulting in reduced cancer risk, earlier detection of cancer, better treatment and improved quality of life.

The promise of CCC is:

- Coordination across silos – funding streams, public health and care delivery
- Less duplication of effort
- Comprehensive approach to cancer control – from prevention to end of life
- Focus on evidence-based interventions
- Multisector partnership approach

State Cancer Control Plans

Every state has a cancer control plan. State cancer plans summarize the cancer burden in the state and identify goals, objectives and strategies to address the entire cancer continuum. Goals and measurable objectives guide the selection of evidence-based interventions that will work best in a state's communities and populations. Plans are typically updated every 5 years. Provide the link to your state's plan to the State Chair.

CCC Coalitions

Comprehensive cancer control (CCC) coalitions have been established in each state to bring together cancer control stakeholders. **CCC coalitions represent an engine of change in the U.S. for cancer issues.** These coalitions develop, implement and evaluate state cancer plans and initiatives for the communities where they live and work. Across the nation, thousands of

organizations and individuals are involved in CCC coalitions. Provide the link for the State Chair to learn more about [CCC coalition accomplishments](#).

CCC National Stakeholders

Similar to the makeup and efforts of a state coalition, there is a CCC National Partnership which functions as a national CCC coalition. The National Partnership consists of 19 leading national cancer organizations that come together to utilize their combined strengths and resources to support and advance the work of CCC coalitions. The ACOS CoC is an active member of the National Partnership. Provide the link for the State Chair to learn more about the [National Partnership](#).

Describe to the CoC State Chair what Engagement with a CCC Coalition Could Look Like

Benefits to the Coalition when ACOS CoC State Chairs and CLP's are Involved. State Chairs can:

- ❑ **Serve as an Advocate Spokesperson for State Cancer Legislation**
State Chairs are encouraged to assist in supporting and advancing cancer-related legislation in their states. This is a critically important role when other coalition members are not able to advocate for legislation.
- ❑ **Advocate for Clinically Important Objectives such as CoC Accreditation in the State Cancer Plan**
State chairs can advocate for the inclusion of important objectives in the cancer plan such as increasing the number of CoC-accredited programs in the state.
- ❑ **Identify Programs for Recruitment into the CoC Accreditation Program**
The State Chair can assist in identifying eligible programs interested in pursuing CoC accreditation. Create a Link between the CCC Coalition and CLP's and Accredited Programs.
- ❑ **Create a Link between the CCC Coalition and CLP's and Accredited Programs**
State chairs can establish and maintain ongoing communication with CLPs at accredited programs and keep them up to date on the CCC coalition's efforts to implement the state cancer plan and identify ways they can be involved. Support of state cancer plan objectives by CoC-accredited cancer programs can contribute to compliance with select CoC accreditation standards.
- ❑ **Present to the CCC Coalition on Behalf of the ACOS CoC**

The State Chair can be an expert and present critically important information on clinically related cancer activities occurring in the state and how they could enhance the state's cancer plan.

Benefits to A State Chair When Involved in a CCC Coalition

Several past and current State Chairs have been a member of their state's coalition and have identified several benefits of being involved in a CCC coalition, including:

- Exposure to a larger view and understanding of the state's cancer burden as well as cancer control efforts in the state.
- Opportunity to develop new or stronger relationships with cancer stakeholders (individuals and organizations) throughout the state.
- Involvement on a policy level on cancer-related issues, such as pain/palliative care, tobacco and tanning bed policies.
- Opportunity to serve as a liaison between the CCC coalition and the state CLPs to communicate to CLP's and CoC-accredited cancer programs current cancer control efforts in the state, how to get involved in local activities, opportunities to advocate for state and local policies, and needs and gaps in services throughout the state.

Potential State Chair Roles

A State Chair's involvement in the state's CCC coalition can happen in many diverse ways that best meets a person's interests, needs and availability. Examples of State Chair roles in a CCC coalition include:

- Serve in a medical advisory role to the state cancer coalition.
- Involve in a state cancer coalition workgroup, such as a cancer care, survivorship or cancer specific workgroup, like a lung cancer screening workgroup.
- Serve as the state cancer coalition chair.
- Member of the leadership team of the state cancer coalition.
- Expert presenter to the coalition on clinical perspectives of the cancer burden in the state.

Next Steps to Engage Your CoC State Chair

Ask and Listen

After engaging in a discussion and providing the talking points above:

- Ask if the State Chair has questions and answer all questions to the best of your ability. If there are clinical members of your coalition, you may want to connect them with the State Chair so they can offer a clinical perspective on coalition involvement.
- Describe the coalition's current priorities and options on how the State Chair could be

involved in those efforts (e.g., membership on a workgroup, presentation on current issues within a priority, etc.).

- Ask and listen to how the State Chair could envision their involvement. Identify and address any concerns or hesitations.

Invite

- Ask the State Chair to the next coalition meeting or an upcoming workgroup meeting they may be interested in.
- Identify at least one or two people that will connect with the State Chair and introduce them to others, sit next to them at a meeting, be a support / mentor to them as they become more familiar with the CCC Coalition, how they operate and opportunities for involvement.