

# ASCO: Drop in cancer mortality greater with Medicaid expansion

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(HealthDay)—States that expanded Medicaid (EXP) had a greater

decrease in age-adjusted cancer mortality than those that did not, according to a study presented at ASCO20, a virtual scientific program hosted by the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

Anna Lee, M.D., M.P.H., from the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, and colleagues used data from the National Center for Health Statistics from 1999 to 2017 to establish trends in age-adjusted [mortality rates](#). Deaths due to cancer were included for patients younger than 65 years. The absolute change in mortality was calculated from 2011-2013 to 2015-2017.

The researchers found that from 1999 to 2017, there was a decrease in overall age-adjusted cancer mortality in the United States, from 66.9 to 48.8 per 100,000. The overall age-adjusted cancer mortality was consistently worse in nonexpansion (NonEXP) states, decreasing from 64.7 to 46.0 per 100,000 and from 69.0 to 51.9 per 100,000 in EXP and NonEXP states, respectively, from 1999 to 2017. Comparing mortality changes from 2011-2013 to 2015-2017, the difference in differences between EXP and NonEXP states was  $-1.1$  and  $-0.6$  per 100,000, respectively. After Medicaid expansion, the estimated overall [cancer mortality](#) benefit gained in EXP states was  $-0.5$  per 100,000, translating to an estimated 785 fewer cancer deaths in 2017.

"We are proud to release the findings of the first nationwide study to show that Medicaid expansion is associated with a reduction in cancer deaths," Lee said in a statement.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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