

Report identifies critical gaps and research opportunities for improved cancer care

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A new report finds that despite progress in the decline of cancer mortality, there are still critical gaps including the need to develop better tools and explore research opportunities that would lead to limiting cancer as a major health concern. This blueprint article completes an eight-part series outlining the American Cancer Society's (ACS) vision for the future control of cancer. The report focuses on highlighting research challenges and opportunities important to significantly change the future of cancer care. It appears in the ACS Journal, *CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians*.

Authored by Lynne W. Elmore, Ph.D., and colleagues, this piece integrates conversations with over 90 leading [cancer](#) experts to facilitate a comprehensive and diverse national research portfolio of new opportunities to advance evidence-based approaches for all [cancer patients](#) and communities. "Our overall goal is to motivate a strategy to develop innovative approaches for [cancer prevention](#), interception, treatment, and improvement of quality of life for cancer survivors, and these findings present incredible potential for collaboration and clinical impact," write the authors.

The report highlights a gap in cancer care related to inconsistent coordination between researchers and caregivers. In the article, the authors point out the need to narrow knowledge gaps in understanding the biology of cancer development in early stages and its treatment resistance to ensure that all cancer patients can be provided cancer care that is effective, practical and affordable. They also believe that success

depends on the need to develop the next generation of tools to understand, prevent, and better control all cancer types. In 2019, only about one-half of patients with cancer in the United States could be cured with existing therapies, and the remaining one-half were expected to die of their disease. In addition, while data shows that therapeutic interventions have improved significantly, chronic comorbidities often adversely affect cancer survivors and their quality of life.

The authors also note that maximizing opportunities for clinical impact requires a focus on broad-based integration of research efforts including data sets, cancer models, and testing combinatorial strategies to screen, detect and diagnose cancers. Other opportunities for research integration include forming transdisciplinary scientific teams, increasing the recruitment of ethnically and racially diverse populations in clinical trials, and testing innovative strategies to improve cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment and survivorship in underserved communities.

"Our ability to manage cancer as a chronic disease will continue to grow and demand increased investments in survivorship research to maximize quality of life for people with cancer, their families and caregivers," said Elmore. "While it can appear daunting to consider all that needs to be done in research to conquer the hundreds of diseases we group together under the moniker of cancer, this report shows that if we continue to collaborate and leverage collective resources progress can continue to be made in the future of cancer care."

More information: Blueprint for cancer research: Critical gaps and opportunities, *CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians*, onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.3322/caac.21652

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