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## **News Release**

### **New Cancer Data and Prevention Plans Unveiled**

*Utah communities already using findings to target interventions*

(SALT LAKE CITY) – Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Utah. Each year, more than 8,000 Utahns are diagnosed with the disease, and more than 1,900 die from it. In an effort to lower cancer rates and raise screening rates, the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) today released the *Utah Cancer Small Area Report* and *Utah’s Comprehensive Cancer Prevention and Control Plan*.

The *Small Area Report* provides a broad overview of the most common types of cancer in the U.S, Utah, and 61 small areas within Utah. This is the first major report from the UDOH that consolidates cancer screening, incidence, and mortality data for small areas in a single source. It has pinpointed higher-than-average cancer rates in several areas of the state, including a high skin cancer rate in Summit County.

“In Utah, we are below the national average in screening for breast, cervical, and prostate cancers – cancers that can be treated more effectively when detected early,” said Robert Rolfs, M.D., M.P.H., State Epidemiologist. “The report is a great way to look at cancer more precisely across the state, which will help decision makers determine how best to allocate limited funds to communities with the greatest need.”

*Utah’s Comprehensive Cancer Prevention and Control Plan* is a five-year plan created in partnership by the UDOH and the Utah Cancer Action Network (UCAN). Utah has one of the highest melanoma rates in the nation, and practicing sun-safe behaviors may lower a person’s chances of developing this deadly form of skin cancer. In fact, the plan has already led to the implementation of evidence-based interventions. Several areas throughout the state have launched programs to increase awareness of the dangers of the sun and need for sun safety.

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The plan contains the following seven key areas of focus: Cancer Morbidity and Mortality; Advocacy and Public Policy; Primary Prevention and Awareness; Early Detection and Treatment; Survivorship and Quality of Life; Professional Education and Practice; and Data Acquisition, Utilization, and Management. Each of these areas contains goals, objectives and strategies that aim to decrease the burden of cancer in Utah.

“The goal of UCAN is to educate all Utahns about how to prevent cancer, encourage them to get screened, and ultimately prevent cancer deaths, through collaborative efforts,” said Lynette Hansen, co-chair of UCAN. “We encourage individuals, organizations, and communities across the state to take part in this fight against cancer,” Hansen added. “The plan provides a roadmap to make positive changes and help in this battle.”

UCAN is a community coalition of more than 150 partners across the state with a vested interest in fighting cancer.

For more information, or to view the reports in their entirety, visit [www.ucan.cc](http://www.ucan.cc) or <http://cancerutah.org/smallAreaReport/>.

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*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.*