Increasing the Capacity to Implement Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Interventions to Prevent and Control Cancer in Indiana

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Background

Health policy at the local, state, or federal level has a large impact on the community, guiding the public to choose healthy behaviors and increase accessibility to healthier options. State cancer control programs are in a unique position to implement policy systems, and environmental (PSE) changes and evoke sustainable, far-reaching impact on the burden of cancer. The Indiana Cancer Consortium (ICC) implements a strategic cancer-related policy agenda to influence the health of Indiana residents.

Impact of Cancer in Indiana

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Policy Initiatives

1. Tobacco tax: Increase state cigarette tax from 99.5 cents to $2.00.

   Current Landscape
   - Despite a $0.44 cigarette tax increase in 2007, Indiana has one of the lowest cigarette taxes in the U.S. at $0.995/pack compared to other states’ average of $1.69/pack.
   - In 2013, ICC released the Brown Cigarettes Report, which provides the evidence base to support reclassifying brown cigarettes as regular cigarettes. Brown cigarettes are priced and taxed at a lower rate than regular cigarettes, thus increasing their use and appeal.

   Looking Ahead
   - Work with partners to support the efforts of a statewide tobacco tax campaign during 2014-2015, and educate about the benefits of increasing tobacco tax and reclassifying brown cigarettes as a way to prevent and control cancer.

2. Smokefree air: Support the passage of a comprehensive statewide smokefree air law.

   Current Landscape
   - In 2012, Indiana passed its first statewide smokefree air law covering nearly all public places in the state, including restaurants and other workplaces. Local communities have the ability to adopt stronger smokefree air laws than the state law.

   Looking Ahead
   - Protect Indiana’s statewide smokefree air law and convene partners to strengthen Indiana’s law.

3. Complete Streets: Increase the number of policies from three to seven

   Current Landscape
   - From 2010 to 2014, the number of Complete Streets policies in Indiana increased from three to 12. In 2012, IndianaComplete Streets Coalition was ranked the strongest in the nation. In 2013, Peru, Indiana, received recognition as the number two Complete Streets policy.
   - The ICC provides technical assistance to statewide coalitions and partners by offering media advocacy trainings and disseminating resources about the connection between the built environment and primary prevention of cancer.

   Looking Ahead
   - Maintain active partnerships with the Indiana Complete Streets Coalition and Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity to pass local ordinances and support statewide adoption of Complete Streets in all future and existing transportation projects.

4. Physical Activity: Support 30 minutes of physical activity a day in elementary schools.

   Current Landscape
   - ‘The Burden of Obesity Related Cancers and the Promotion of Physical Activity in Indiana’ describes cancers associated with obesity and outlines PSE approaches that can be adopted at the state community, and school district level to increase opportunities for physical activity, especially among children.
   - The ICC supports efforts to incorporate physical activity standards in school wellness policies and also supports statewide physical education and activity advocacy campaigns.

   Looking Ahead
   - Educate communities, organizations, and school districts about the burden of obesity-related cancers, and how PSE interventions in school settings positively influence the primary prevention of cancer.
   - Inform decision-makers on how PSE changes in schools and communities encourage physical activity by making the healthy choice the easy choice.

Results

Since adoption of the policy agenda in 2011:

- Approximately 30% of Hoosiers are completely protected from secondhand smoke exposure in the workplace as a result of 18 comprehensive smokefree air laws.
- From 2011 to 2013, the Indiana adult smoking rate decreased from 25.6% to 21.9% (NHATS).

Currently, there are 12 Complete Streets policies in the state which cover roughly 46% of Indiana’s communities.

There are 17 school districts that include 30 minutes of physical activity a day in their school wellness policy, benefiting approximately 80,000 students.

Conclusion

The ICC’s unique tools and targeted technical assistance to increase the capacity and infrastructure to influence PSE change interventions. The results demonstrate PSE changes are positively influencing health behaviors and increasing opportunities for Indiana residents to engage in healthier behaviors. It is important for state cancer control programs continue educating and providing the evidence base to support PSE changes as a way to reduce the risk and burden of cancer. To learn more about cancer control, visit www.indianacancer.org.

Acknowledgements

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Top 4 Cancers

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Risk Factors

- **National**
  - 24%
  - 24%

- **National**
  - 19.6%
  - 19.6%

- **National**
  - 65.5%
  - 65.5%

- **National**
  - 80.0%
  - 80.0%

- **National**
  - 30%
  - 30%

- **National**
  - 46%
  - 46%

- **National**
  - 80,000
  - 80,000

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