

Cancer Association of Greater New Orleans

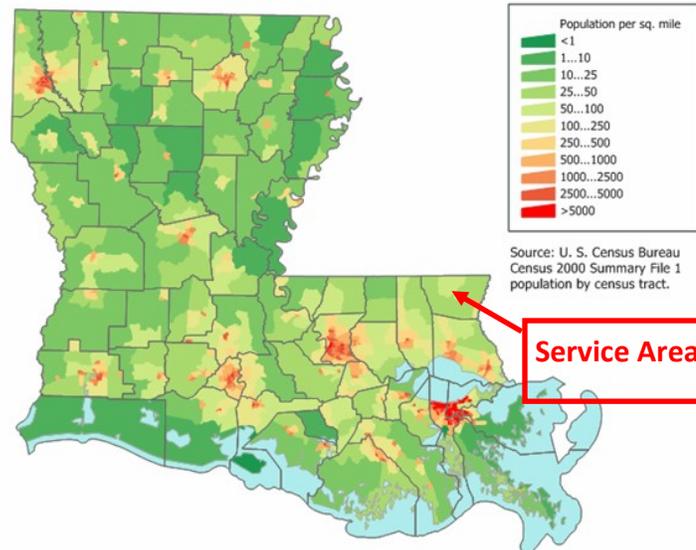
Innovation to Increase Healthy Behaviors Among Rural Cancer Survivors

As cancer survivorship increases, long-term health outcomes have become an important public health issue. Studies show cancer survivors engaging in evidence based wellness behaviors have improved quality of life, physical function, and reduced fatigue. Rural survivors typically experience limited /no availability or access to wellness programs.

The Cancer Association of Greater New Orleans (CAGNO) collaborated with National Association of Chronic Disease Directors, (NACDD), and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to implement a multi-component wellness program for cancer survivors in rural Louisiana.

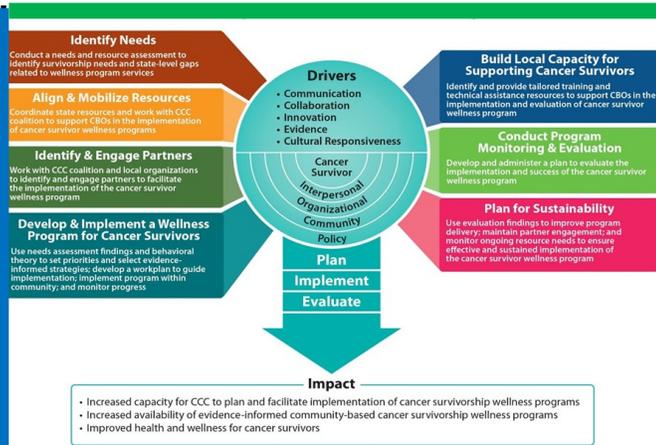
About Cancer Association of Greater New Orleans' Louisiana Rural Project

- Selected one rural parish, Washington Parish
- A rural parish of roughly 45,000 people with two major towns: Bogalusa and Franklinton.
- The parish is served by a few health systems but there are no cancer services in Washington Parish.
- Rural residents are required to travel at least 80 miles round trip for cancer services in-state or out of state, usually in Mississippi.



Our Primary Accomplishment

Building local capacity within the communities so that the cancer survivors themselves have taken leadership of the initiative.



Using the CDC's Guide* and its framework *Developing Cancer Survivor Wellness Programs*, CAGNO built innovative approaches and adapted the evidence based interventions to address rural cancer survivor needs.

Increase Local Capacity

To improve cancer survivor outcomes.

- Needs assessment found several informal cancer survivor support groups who were seeking ways to get involved in their communities and support cancer survivors.
- Parish cancer survivors wanted to mentor or help others throughout their cancer journey.
- Women survivors were interested in nutrition, opportunities to be physically active, and support groups that addressed mental health and wellness.

Built Sustainability

by engaging support from cancer survivors “We Can-Cer Vive” activities.

- Cancer survivor support groups approached CAGNO suggesting bigger “community buy-in” through fund raising, marketing and coordinating support groups.
- Building for program sustainability, several support groups organized a Tutu Trot (80 attendees) to raise funds to assist with their support groups. These funds will be used for food/nutritional products and gas cards for cancer patients who need help getting to treatment.

Identifying key partners to collaborate in developing, delivering, or maintaining the three multi-component evidence-based wellness program

- Community partners housed the survivor’s garden and with an additional mini grant started a wall mural. One partner donated space for support group activities while a second partner handled marketing and communicating what the survivors were doing for their community, and other partners delivered nutrition programs and cooking demonstrations.
- Survivors identified several user-friendly on-line apps to measure their physical activity.
- CAGNO identified evidence-based mental health programming designed to be led by health educators; the rural community lacked available mental health professional time to deliver programs.



“When the local cancer survivors took on a leadership role many avenues of support opened for the project. It is absolutely necessary for local residents to provide the community leadership.” - community based organization director