

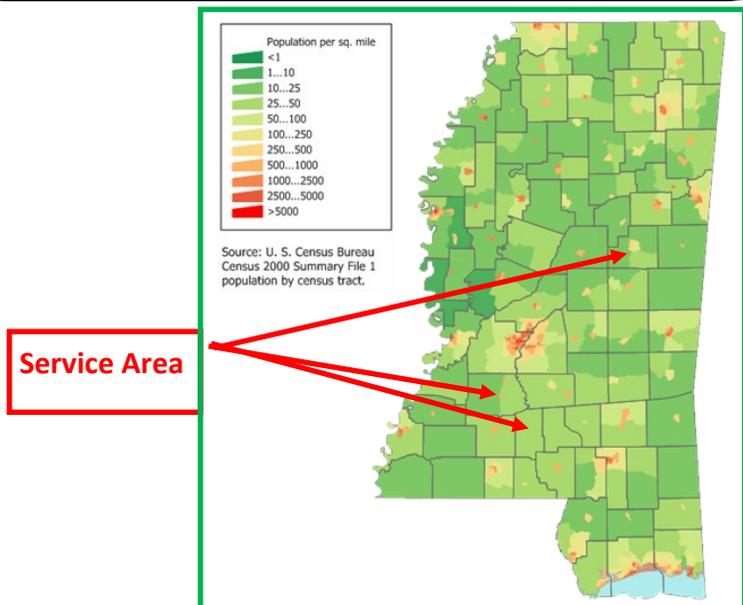
# Mississippi State Department of Health Innovation to Increase Healthy Behaviors Among Rural Cancer Survivors

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 Program of the Mississippi State Health Department 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 Mississippi.

## About Department of Health in Mississippi's Rural Project

- **Service area:** 3 counties – Jefferson, Franklin and Holmes, combined population: 32,766.
- **Franklin and Jefferson** counties rank as top 5 impoverished counties; both are considered food deserts
- 2017 age-adjusted cancer incidence rate: 196 per 100,000 people
- **Franklin & Jefferson** counties: one federally qualified health center in county; must travel to neighboring counties for special services
- **Holmes County:** 6 hospitals and 2 community health centers

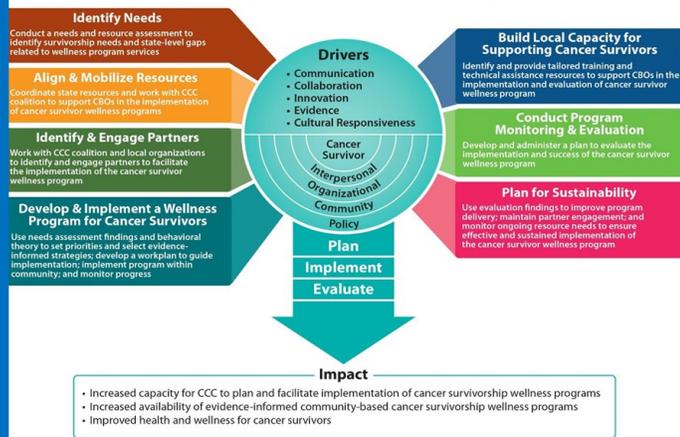


## Our Primary Accomplishment

Engaging the community in identifying needs and selecting the interventions has allowed the effort to grow and be sustained; community members are now leading future endeavors.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
CHRONIC DISEASE DIRECTORS  
Promoting Health. Preventing Disease.

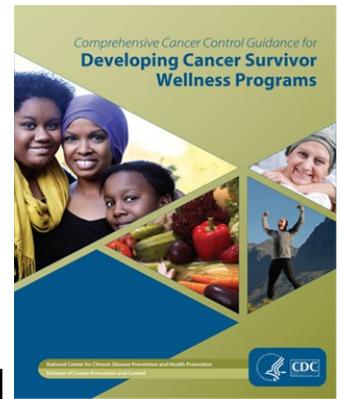


**Using the Program Logic Model and Guidance outlined in the “Guide” \* *Developing Cancer Survivor Wellness Programs*, the Mississippi State Cancer Program experienced successes by serving as convener, connector and broker to align and mobilize resources:**

**Needs Assessment**

The state health department strategically held their statewide annual survivorship education conference in the rural geographic region that encompasses Franklin, Jefferson and Holmes counties. Cancer survivors from these counties participated in a “town hall” meeting to identify survivor needs and engage local leaders.

- The Mississippi Partnership for Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalition (MP3C) Southern Region was instrumental in providing logistics and hosting meetings.
- Nutrition, tobacco cessation and mental health/well being were identified as priority wellness needs for cancer survivors, priorities also supported by state BRFS data.



**Develop and implement a Wellness Program for Cancer Survivors**

- The Jefferson County Cancer Support group identified a local counseling service to provide a mental health program.
- The regional tobacco coalition took responsibility for recruiting and enrolling cancer survivors who used tobacco products into the state’s Tobacco Quitline.
- The Mississippi Department of Agriculture was key to executing implementation of the nutrition education program in farmers markets and providing evaluation data.
- The state Diabetes and Heart Disease programs were instrumental in adapting existing nutrition education programs to cancer survivors.

**Conduct Program Monitoring and Evaluation**

- The MS Department of Agriculture shared their existing monitoring program to provide evaluation data, indicating that over 170 cancer survivors and caregivers completed the first nutrition program.
- The Jefferson County Cancer Support Group reported 33 cancer survivors completed the first mental health program.
- Locally based community groups have taken ownership of the wellness programs, ensuring their sustained availability
- The State Cancer Plan adopted an objective to expand the multi-component wellness program for cancer survivors to three rural counties each year.

Partners at the state level showed how state level agencies can collaborate to enhance local groups. ***“The state agencies did more than bring resources to communities; they also helped to mobilize people and resources.”*** -Cancer Program Director