

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES CONNECTED AND ENGAGED

From the Director of Community Health Access

Issue 31, February 2023

We hope that 2023 is off to a healthy start. By now, you have formed habits needed to keep your New Year's resolutions or plans in order to be a better you!

As you begin this year being "the best you" possible, we hope that you prioritize improving your personal health and the health of your community. One of the ways you can do that is by practicing healthy lifestyle behaviors such as balanced nutrition, regular physical activity and an annual visit to your health care provider for age-appropriate health and cancer screenings.

February is Cancer Prevention Month. These healthy lifestyle practices are important to reducing your risk for cancer and for preventing cancers

such as cervical and colorectal cancer. As a reminder, cervical and colorectal cancer are the only cancers that can be prevented through age-appropriate screening (both cancers) and HPV vaccination (cervical cancer).

The Office of Community Outreach & Engagement is committed to engaging with you even more in 2023 to provide quality education and

support to facilitate cancer screenings. We continue to build relationships with clinical and community partners to help you receive the best quality cancer care no matter where you live.

Let us be intentional in 2023 in making healthy lifestyles a priority for cancer prevention!

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O'NEAL COMPREHENSIVE
CANCER CENTER



THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

Access to Care: COE Screening and Navigation Activities

The Community Health Access area of the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement had a busy year in 2022 in developing and enhancing relationships to facilitate and increase access to cancer screenings. Read more about three major cancer-screening events that COE participated in:

Colorectal Cancer Screening – Marengo County, Whitfield Regional Hospital (March and April, 2022)

COE collaborated with Whitfield Regional Hospital in Demopolis, Alabama, to provide colonoscopies for rarely or never screened individuals 45 years or older. County coordinators educated and recruited 60 individuals from neighboring Marengo, Sumter and Choctaw counties. Results show that 48 individuals (77%) showed up for screening and 52% had specimens sent for pathology. Findings included polyps and diverticulosis, and the majority did not need follow up. The screening was provided at no cost to uninsured people thanks to the partnership with WRH.

Prostate Cancer Education Open House – November 12, 2022

COE collaborated with the UAB Genitourinary Cancer Management Team, led by Soroush Rais-Bahrami, M.D., to deliver a prostate cancer outreach program and assist with access to care. The collaboration also included Jefferson County Faith-Based Alliance for the Advancement of Health Equity. There were 70 individuals in attendance who had an open education forum with the clinical team from UAB. Six men were scheduled onsite for screening appointments at UAB Urology. Greater Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church in Birmingham, provided the space. The Men of GSMBC provided a “tailgate atmosphere.”

Iron Bowl Lung Cancer Screening – November 26, 2022

In collaboration with the American Cancer Society and Infirmary Health in Mobile, COE engaged with more than 300 individuals for lung cancer screening risk assessments and provided locations for screenings.

2023 is off to a great start as COE launches a Pilot Navigation Screening Program in Calhoun County. The goal is to facilitate cancer screening focusing on breast and cervical cancers via the Alabama Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program and the local health department. For colorectal, prostate and lung cancers, COE is building relationships with local federally qualified healthcare centers.



COE Community Advisory Board Announces New Leadership

As we begin a new year, we welcome new leadership for the COE Community Advisory Board. Lauren Roberts, executive director at Forge Breast Cancer Survivors Center, a local nonprofit providing supportive care to breast cancer survivors, is chair of the CAB. Justin Pope, director of Ancillary and Marketing at the Panola Medical Behavioral Health Center in Mississippi, will serve as co-chair of the CAB. Roberts and

Pope joined the CAB in 2020 and have been very active in our work groups, Community Dissemination Institute and more. We are excited to have them move into these new positions and serve in critical roles to the COE Leadership Team.

A special thank you to Dr. Nathaniel Brooks for serving as the inaugural CAB chair, from 2019 to 2022.



Lauren Roberts



Justin Pope



Dr. Nathaniel Brooks

CANCER PREVENTION

Did you know colorectal and cervical cancers are preventable?

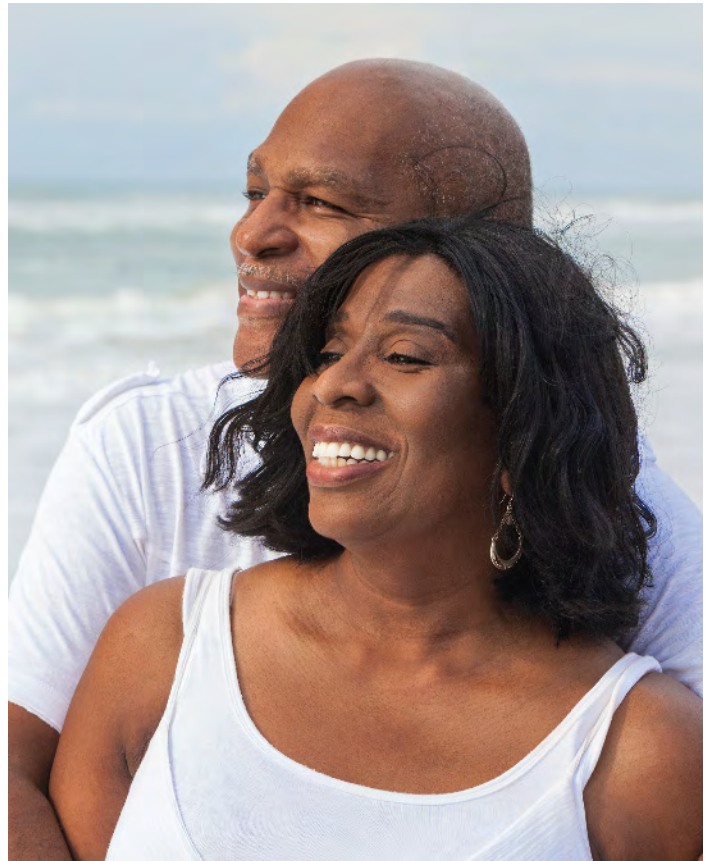
- Get your colonoscopy to screen for colorectal cancer.
- Get screened for cervical cancer.
- Pre-teens and young adults, get your HPV vaccine.

GOOD NEWS!

You can lower your cancer risk!

More than 40% of cancer deaths could be prevented with healthy lifestyle changes. You can take action to reduce your cancer risk.

- Become tobacco free. There is NO safe form of tobacco use. If you use tobacco, the best decision you can make is to quit.
- Get regular cancer screenings. Talk with your health care provider about what is right for you. Early detection saves lives!
- Get vaccinated. The HPV vaccine is safe and effective in preventing six different cancers, including cervical cancer.
- Stay active. Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity five days a week.
- Choose wisely. Eat a diet high in fruits and vegetables.
- Protect your skin against UV exposure. Wear sunscreen and avoid tanning beds.



(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)



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