

# Direction From Data

**T**his past summer, three pivotal trend reports were released that give direction to clinical oncology care and oncology nursing.

After a tumultuous 2020, results from the 2020 U.S. census were finally compiled and reported in August 2021. Since 1790, the census has established legislative districts and eligibility for approximately 13% of the country's grants and programs (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Highlights from the 2020 census include the following:

- With a 2.6% decrease in those who identify as non-Hispanic White, the United States reported the most diverse population in its history. During the past 10 years, the percentage of those who identify as White decreased from 63.7% to 57.8%.
- Compared to the 2010 census, the Hispanic population accounted for about 50% of growth, with 62.1 million (18.7%) people self-identifying as Hispanic. Also of note, the percentage of self-identified Asian Americans doubled to 6.1%, and the Black population was largely unchanged at 12.1% of the U.S. population. If trends continue as anticipated, there will be no racial majority in the United States by 2045.
- The U.S. population grew during the last 10 years by only 7.4%—the slowest 10-year growth rate since the 1930s.

The second data report on life expectancy in the United States was from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Arias et al., 2021). Here are the takeaways:

- Life expectancy in the United States has decreased by 1.5 years, from 78.8 years in 2019 to 77.3 years in 2020. Mortality from the COVID-19 pandemic was the single greatest effect on U.S. population longevity. Heart disease

and cancer remain the first and second leading causes of death in the United States.

- From 2019 to 2020, life expectancy at birth in the United States was the lowest since 2003.
- Drug overdose-related deaths accounted for more than a third of all unintentional injury deaths and were at an all-time high in 2020 of more than 93,000 deaths.

- From 2014 to 2018, death rates decreased for lung cancer and melanoma, slowed for colorectal and female breast cancers, and remained steady for prostate cancer.

Data give direction and support action. As individual clinical oncology nurses, we have agency, experience, and wisdom to influence the care of our patients. As representatives of a community of clinical oncology nurses, we all can call on our

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Finally, cancer statistics were compiled from the past five years of Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results Program and cancer registry data based on incidence rates from 2013 to 2017 and mortality rates from 2014 to 2018 (Islami et al., 2021). Trends include the following:

- In all ages from 2013 to 2017, overall cancer incidence rates remained generally stable among men but slightly increased in women.
- For all ages from 2014 to 2018, overall cancer death rates decreased per year by 2.2% in men and 1.7% in women.
- Death rates decreased for 11 of the 19 most common cancer in men. However, cancer mortality rates increased in men for cancer of the bones and joints, oral cavity and pharynx, soft tissue, brain and other nervous systems, liver, and pancreas.
- In women, death rates decreased for 14 of the 20 most common cancers but increased for malignancies of the uterus, liver, brain and other nervous systems, pancreas, and soft tissue.

expertise, resolve, and shared humanity to advance quality care for patients with cancer.



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## REFERENCES

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## KEYWORDS

census; population; diversity; cancer statistics

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