



888 16th Street NW
Suite 800
Washington DC 20006

202-463-2080
800-298-2436

lungcanceralliance.org

Press Contact
Kay Cofrancesco
202-463-2080

kcofrancesco@lungcanceralliance.org

LUNG CANCER ALLIANCE ISSUES INAUGURAL REPORT CARD ON LUNG CANCER

Nation's Number One Cancer Killer Receives Failing Marks on Key Benchmarks

Washington, DC, Jan. 19, 2006: The Lung Cancer Alliance (LCA), the only national non-profit organization dedicated solely to advocating for people living with lung cancer or those at risk for the disease, today issued the first **Report Card on Lung Cancer**, an assessment of progress being made in the battle against this lethal disease. The majority of grades received were failing.

Lung cancer is the number one cancer killer, resulting in 30 percent of all cancer deaths and killing more people annually than breast, prostate, colon, liver, and kidney cancers – combined.

“Lung cancer is the most lethal of all major cancers,” said Laurie Fenton, President of The Lung Cancer Alliance. “This **Report Card on Lung Cancer** will put public health leaders and the American public on notice that it is time to change this.”

The **Report Card on Lung Cancer** will evaluate progress utilizing key benchmarks annually in the battle to eradicate this disease.

“Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in men and women,” said Paul A. Bunn, Jr., MD, Professor of Medicine and Director of the University of the Colorado Cancer Center (UCCC); former President of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO); Member, Board of Directors, The Lung Cancer Alliance. “We have made insufficient progress in this dreaded disease in part due to a lack of resources. Hopefully, it will encourage our public health leaders to come together to develop an overall plan with a sense of urgency to increase lung cancer’s survivorship.”

The **Report Card on Lung Cancer** graded seven categories:

- **Number of Deaths** – Lung cancer is the number one cancer killer, killing three times as many men as prostate cancer, nearly twice as many women as breast cancer and more than twice as many men and women as colorectal cancer. The death rate is so high that an estimated 172,570 people were diagnosed in 2005 and approximately 163,510 died.

GRADE: F

NO MORE EXCUSES. NO MORE LUNG CANCER.

- **Five-Year-Survival-Rate** – Only 15% of those diagnosed live longer than five years. There has been virtually no improvement since President Nixon and Congress declared “War on Cancer” in 1971. By comparison, breast cancer’s five-year-survival rate is now 88% and prostate cancer’s is 99%.
GRADE: F
- **Number of Late-Stage Diagnoses** – Seventy percent of diagnoses are late-stage. Late stage diagnosis is lethal diagnosis.
GRADE: F
- **Newly-Addicted Youth Smokers** – About 2,000 new “daily” smokers under the age of 18 become addicted each day, more than 700,000 a year.
GRADE: F
- **Number of New Treatment and Diagnostic Options in the last 30 Years** – Slight progress has been made only within the last few years. Significantly more work must be done.
GRADE: D
- **Federally-Supported Early Detection Program** – The federal government does not support early screening for lung cancer, while it does for other major cancer with comparable public health service ratings.
GRADE: F
- **Overall Federal Commitment** – Lacks overall plan and sense of urgency. Lung cancer is under-funded and under-researched. Only \$1,829 spent per lung cancer death, compared to \$23,474 per estimated breast cancer death and \$14,369 per estimated prostate cancer death.
GRADE: F

“It is not a surprise that The Lung Cancer Alliance would give their Newly-Addicted Youth Smokers category a failing grade,” said Cheryl G. Heaton, Dr. P.H., President and Chief Executive Officer of the American Legacy Foundation and a Member, Board of Directors, The Lung Cancer Alliance. “Now is the time to redouble youth smoking prevention efforts.”

The **Report Card on Lung Cancer** will be widely distributed among public policy leaders, medical professionals and health care associations working to improve outcomes for lung cancer patients.

“Because we represent patients, caregivers and those at risk for this disease, it’s clear we have much work to do,” said Ms. Fenton. “We have rolled up our sleeves and look forward to working with all those committed to improving these outcomes when the **Report Card on Lung Cancer** is released next year.”

For more information on lung cancer, the support services of The Lung Cancer Alliance or to view the complete **Report Card on Lung Cancer**, visit www.lungcanceralliance.org.

Statistical sources are available at www.lungcanceralliance.org.