**Bridge to Community: Needs Assessment and Data Collection Through Community Partnerships**

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## 1. Background
The University of Maryland Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center (UMGCCC) serves a catchment area of 5.4 million Marylanders in Baltimore City and the 10 central counties of Maryland. A primary objective of the UMGCCC Office of Community Outreach and Engagement (COE) is to use a data-driven approach to describe the catchment area—inclusive of a needs assessment—to inform strategic planning and program development aligned with community and UMGCCC priorities. UMGCCC partnered with Community Ministry of Prince George's County (CMPGC) in 2020 to conduct its inaugural needs assessment. CMPGC is an interfaith nonprofit organization focused on reducing poverty and health disparities. This presentation describes the 2025 follow-up assessment evaluating ongoing cancer needs within the UMGCCC catchment area and adjacent regions.

## 2. Goals
The needs assessment aims to obtain responses from 1,250 Marylanders representing Baltimore City and Maryland's 23 counties via a 28-item electronic survey to:

- Describe the demographics of community needs assessment participants and assess cancer-related knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors among respondents
- Identify potential barriers to cancer screening, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment
- Inform the development of culturally competent and accessible cancer control programs and research priorities

## 3. Solutions and Methods
CMPGC, in collaboration with UMGCCC, developed, pilot tested, and disseminated an electronic survey on demographics, cancer knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors. To ensure the survey is reflective of the UMGCCC catchment area and adjacent regions, the goal is recruitment of 1,250 Maryland residents representative across sex, age, race, geography, and socioeconomic status. CMPGC and UMGCCC jointly created the inaugural survey in 2020. The 2025 survey expanded on the 2020 version with revisions based on iterative feedback from the UMGCCC Community Advisory Board (CAB) and its members.

To facilitate outreach and community trust, a video featuring UMGCCC CAB members and leadership was disseminated with recruitment materials. Recruitment outreach included emails to community partners, health-system liaisons, the UMGCCC CAB and membership, and in-person distribution at cultural events and community hubs such as libraries, barber shops, and auto supply stores. The project is conducted in compliance with the University of Maryland Institutional Review Board. All eligible participants receive an electronic gift card as an incentive.

## 4. Outcomes
Preliminary analyses (N=431) suggest high representation of females (76 percent), Black individuals (48 percent), college educated residents (58 percent), and cancer survivors (20 percent). Breast (85 percent), prostate (55 percent), and colorectal (49 percent) cancer were the cancers perceived to be most affecting Maryland communities. Participants reported not getting screened (67 percent), tobacco (65 percent), and genetics/family history (64 percent) as factors contributing most to cancer in their

community. Participants generally agreed that it was important/very important to conduct research to help cure cancer (91 percent) and 55 percent reported willingness to take part in a trial to test a new cancer treatment if they had cancer and a health care provider recommended it to them (36 percent) indicated that they were "neutral" in their decision to agree.

**5. Lessons Learned and Future Directions**
After data collection and analysis, we will produce lay and scientific reports. These reports will be shared to guide community activities and needs, and to inform UMGCCC leadership, members, and cancer professionals on research, strategy, outreach, and priority-setting based on community input.