



Association of American Cancer Institutes In Memoriam: Dr. Edith P. Mitchell

The Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) Board of Directors, staff, and cancer center leaders are saddened by the unexpected passing of **Edith P. Mitchell, MD, MACP, FCCP, FRCP (London)**, the enterprise vice president for cancer disparities at Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center (SKCC) at Jefferson Health, director of the Center to Eliminate Cancer Disparities and associate director for diversity affairs at SKCC, and professor of medicine and medical oncology at Thomas Jefferson University's Sidney Kimmel Medical College.

AACI members were fortunate to benefit from her broad expertise, which she shared during panel discussions at AACI Clinical Research Innovation (CRI) and Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative (PCLI) meetings in 2018 and 2020, respectively. A member of AACI's Leadership Diversity and Development Initiative (LDDI) Steering Committee (2022-2023), she was slated to present a keynote highlighting her career journey—which spanned over 50 years—at the 2024 AACI Leadership Diversity and Development Workshop.

“Dr. Mitchell was always enthusiastic about participating in AACI events and activities, and we deeply appreciate the knowledge and experience she shared with us,” said AACI Executive Director **Jennifer W. Pegher**. “She brought much-needed attention to cancer health disparities and was a pioneer in recognizing the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in clinical trials.”

In her most recent role at SKCC, Dr. Mitchell oversaw a team focused on identifying and eliminating barriers to cancer care – especially those related to racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities, and social determinants of health. Cancer health disparities were also central to her research, which examined factors affecting clinical trial participation and barriers to accrual among underrepresented populations. Additionally, Dr. Mitchell's research explored novel drug evaluation, chemo-radiation strategies, new therapeutic regimens, supportive care, and patient selection criteria for clinical trials in breast, colorectal, and pancreatic cancers, and other GI malignancies.

AACI President **Robert A. Winn, MD**, director of VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center, said, “Her legacy is one of service and dedication to underserved communities. To honor her legacy, we must all step up our own efforts to eliminate disparities and make health and cancer equity realities.”

A retired U.S. Air Force Brigadier General, Dr. Mitchell was the first woman physician in history to attain the rank. She completed 36 years in the armed forces and supported fellow veterans through her work with the Veterans Affairs Hospital in Philadelphia. Dr. Mitchell was the recipient of numerous awards for military service and community health. She served as the 116th President of the National Medical Association; was appointed a member of the President's Cancer Panel (2019-2023); and was inducted into the National Historical Black College Hall of Fame, among many other achievements.