The Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) comprises 100 of the leading academic and freestanding cancer research centers in North America. AACI is dedicated to reducing the burden of cancer by enhancing the impact of academic cancer centers.

AACI advances the objectives of cancer centers by promoting widespread recognition of the cancer center network, facilitating interaction among the centers, educating policymakers, and fostering the development of partnerships between cancer centers and other cancer organizations to improve the overall quality of cancer care.

CLINICAL RESEARCH
AACI Clinical Research Innovation (CRI) continues to provide a network for cancer center clinical research leaders to share best practices that promote the efficient operation of cancer center clinical research facilities. Much of CRI’s activity is organized around an annual meeting attended by more than 400 clinical trials leaders from AACI cancer centers, industry representatives, and government agencies. Member services include access to an active listserv with more than 600 members and a document library.

PHYSICIAN CLINICAL LEADERSHIP
AACI’s Physician Clinical Leadership Initiative (PCLI) is a forum for AACI cancer center physician leaders to promote cancer center clinical and quality care programs. PCLI establishes best practices to address cancer center interests through an annual meeting and by hosting webinars on topics such as minority recruitment to clinical trials, clinical pathways, and multidisciplinary cancer care.

CAR T-CELL THERAPY
Over half of AACI cancer centers are approved to provide chimeric antigen receptor T-cell (CAR T) therapies to patients. To advance its use and establish best practices, AACI established the CAR T Initiative in 2018. AACI centers can engage with the initiative through webinars, listserv discussions, conference calls, and meetings. Working groups focus on issues including CAR T clinical research and administrative barriers.

NETWORK CARE
Many cancer center hospital systems are expanding their services across large geographic regions, while cancer care is consolidating around ever-enlarging groups. Through its Network Care Initiative, AACI aims to describe these networks and to develop solutions to improve the quality of cancer care administered across individual cancer center networks, with better integration of treatment services—especially those now unique to our centers—into the community.

PUBLIC AWARENESS
AACI’s wide-ranging public issues activity is guided in large part by the AACI Government Relations (GR) Forum, created to coordinate efforts among all cancer centers in educating legislators about the cancer research community and its positive impact on patients. The GR Forum also enhances understanding of policy issues pertaining to cancer prevention, treatment, clinical trials, and survivorship.

PUBLIC POLICY RESOURCE LIBRARY
AACI’s current presidential initiative, headed by AACI President Roy A. Jensen, MD, focuses on developing a comprehensive library of model legislation for cancer centers to adapt and use on the state level. Members of AACI’s Government Relations Steering Committee recommend and share legislation and educational materials, backed by robust data provided by other national cancer advocacy organizations.
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ANNUAL MEETING

The AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting convenes hundreds of AACI cancer center directors and administrators with leaders of national cancer research and advocacy groups, industry, and government health agencies. No other meeting presents information on cancer research and patient care as it directly pertains to academic cancer centers. It is also unique in providing cancer center leaders with a forum to discuss these issues and develop best practices with their peers.

The annual meeting featured sessions on the role of artificial intelligence and Big Data in cancer care, training the cancer center workforce for 2030, efforts to control rising health care costs, and community outreach and engagement, as well as the inaugural CAR T Symposium.

Douglas R. Lowy, MD, was the 2019 AACI Distinguished Scientist and the Jon M. and Karen Huntsman family received the 2019 AACI Champion for Cures Award in recognition of their philanthropy. Representatives Kathy Castor (D-FL) and Fred Upton (R-MI) were honored with AACI Public Service Awards.

What do AACI cancer centers do?
AACI cancer centers are at the forefront of efforts to eradicate cancer. These centers of excellence work to ease the burden of cancer on patients, families, and communities through a comprehensive and multidisciplinary program of research, treatment, patient care, prevention, education, and community outreach.

AACI cancer centers are acclaimed worldwide for their excellence in translating promising research findings into new interventions to prevent and treat cancer. Almost every new cancer treatment, key cancer research discovery, or new cancer-related technology available today had its origin as a clinical trial at an AACI cancer center, where it was developed in close partnership with the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries.

How do AACI cancer centers serve their communities?
AACI cancer centers offer their communities ready access to cancer experts from a wide array of disciplines, including diagnosis, treatment, prevention, and patient care. AACI cancer centers also offer access to novel cancer therapies.

What are the benefits of NIH/NCI funding?
With funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the NCI, AACI cancer centers not only save lives but generate biomedical jobs, which boost the economy. AACI cancer centers contribute to regional economic development by joining with partners in the pharmaceutical and biotech industries to create new opportunities to accelerate progress against cancer.

AACI institutions are largely funded by the NIH and the NCI, which rely on stable and predictable federal funding to invest in groundbreaking cancer research. AACI advocates on behalf of these institutions in Washington, DC.

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Last updated: January 2020