

REPORT TO THE THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
STATE OF HAWAII
2023

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF
ACT 162, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII 2022

EARLY LUNG CANCER SCREENING TASK FORCE

PREPARED BY
STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION AND HEALTH PROMOTION DIVISION
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**EARLY LUNG CANCER SCREENING TASK FORCE
PURSUANT TO ACT 162, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII 2022**

Background

Pursuant to Act 162, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2022, the Early Lung Cancer Screening Task Force (“ELCSTF”) was established by Senate Bill No. 3367, Regular Session 2022. The purpose of the Act is to research the steps and resources necessary to increase early lung cancer screening in Hawaii.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths for men and women in Hawaii. Native Hawaiians have one hundred twenty-six new cases of lung cancer per one hundred thousand which is higher than for Caucasians, and dramatically higher than the national rates for other indigenous peoples.

According to the 2021 State of Lung Cancer Report by the American Lung Association, Hawaii ranks last in the nation for the early diagnosis of lung cancer. The United States Preventive Services Task Force expanded its recommendation for screening to include a larger age range and more current and former smokers.

An annual lung cancer screening with low-dose computed tomography is now recommended for adults ages fifty to eighty years who have a twenty pack-year smoking history and currently smoke or have quit within the past fifteen years. This expansion will dramatically increase the number of Hawaii residents considered at high risk for lung cancer.

Act 162, SLH 2022 requires the Department of Health (“DOH”) Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Division, Hawaii Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (“HCCCP”) to establish and convene the ELCSTF. Required members of the task force include a representative from the Office of the Governor, Senate, and House of Representatives, DOH, Department of Human Services, University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii Cancer Center, and each county.

The chairperson of the ELCSTF is required to invite representatives from the following organizations: The United States Department of Veterans Affairs; American Lung Association; American Cancer Society; Hawaii Primary Care Association; an organization representing health care providers with relevant expertise on lung cancer screening; each health insurer operating in the state, including TRICARE; each health care system operating in the state; and any other state agencies, stakeholders, or advocates, as recommended by the majority of the task force.

The ELCSTF is required to:

- (1) Review all available research, studies, and models for increasing early lung cancer screening rates in the State;
- (2) Conduct or initiate new studies as it deems necessary; and
- (3) Create a public awareness campaign to inform Hawaii residents about early lung cancer screening.
- (4) Submit a final report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2023. The report shall include:

- (A) An analysis of the costs associated with early lung cancer screening;
- (B) A list of qualified facilities in the state that perform lung cancer screenings;
- (C) Protocols for health care providers and health care systems to identify populations at high risk for lung cancer;
- (D) An explanation of how health care providers are made aware of available insurance coverage for early cancer screenings;
- (E) Copies of guidelines used by health insurance providers to determine coverage for early lung cancer screening;
- (F) A discussion of cultural and social barriers associated with lung cancer screenings;
- (G) Policy recommendations for increasing early lung cancer screenings; and
- (H) A work plan that identifies the steps needed in the next five years to increase lung cancer screenings in the State.

Progress Report

As of December 2022, the DOH has developed a list of required members to establish the ELCSTF and prepared an invitation letter, but the first initial meeting of the ELCSTF has not convened.

Convening the ELCSTF has been delayed due to changes in leadership (e.g., Office of the Governor, incoming new directors for the University of Hawaii Cancer Center and DOH, and mayoral election results). Without the required membership or a selected chairperson, no progress has been made towards reviewing research or creating a public awareness campaign.

The ELCSTF is projected to be ready for its first meeting by the end of February 2023 and begin these activities, at which point an additional interim progress report will be provided to the Legislature.

Policy Recommendations

The DOH respectfully requests the current Legislature extend all provisions establishing the task force and funding appropriations by at least two (2) years to July 31, 2024.

This will allow for ample time to:

1. Convene the ELCSTF;
2. Perform a more thorough review and analysis of available research;
3. Conduct new studies as necessary;
4. Prepare findings and recommendations for legislation; and
5. Create a well curated, and evidence-based public awareness campaign to inform Hawaii residents about early lung cancer screening.

The DOH also respectfully requests the Legislature to reference the Hawaii Cancer Plan 2030, viewable online at https://hhsp.hawaii.gov/assets/pdf/HHSP_Cancer_Plan_WEB.pdf. The plan serves as a roadmap of the state's cancer prevention and control efforts that lead to policy, systems, and environmental change and navigate our state toward a more integrated and impactful approach to reducing cancer's impact on our diverse residents.