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## Report shows cancer death rates high in North Central Florida compared to state

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (January 7, 2013)— North Central Florida has the highest cancer mortality rates in the state. The recently released **North Central Florida Cancer Report 2013** points to the need for cancer control efforts in our region, especially in rural areas where the burden of cancer is greatest.

The report, produced by WellFlorida Council for the North Central Florida Cancer Control Collaborative (NCFCCC), includes a wide range of cancer data such as cancer death rates, cancer incidence rates, cancer related emergency room visits and hospital discharge data. This epidemiologic profile of eleven counties in North Central Florida highlights disparities between the region and Florida as well as disparities between genders, races, ethnicities and counties.

According to the report, the age-adjusted death rate of *all* cancers is 28% higher in North Central Florida than in the state. Though cancer incidence rates in the region are lower than the state, people in North Central Florida are dying of cancer more frequently.

“This discrepancy indicates a need for improvement in cancer screening, education, awareness, access to healthcare services and other systemic issues,” said Jeff Feller, chief executive officer of WellFlorida Council.

Lung cancer is the number one cancer in Florida and in North Central Florida. But in North Central Florida, the death rate from lung cancer is 42% higher than the state rate.

Other disparities exist. According to Lauren Pollock, associate planner at WellFlorida Council and coordinator of NCFCCC, “The percent of advanced-stage cancers diagnosed in North Central Florida for colorectal, breast, cervical and prostate cancers are all higher than the percent of advanced-stage cancers diagnosed for the state. This is especially important to note because there are screenings that exist for each of these cancers.”

One of NCFCCC’s purposes is to collect data to determine the greatest cancer related needs in the area and develop and carry out plans to meet those needs. The **North Central Florida Cancer Report 2013** will be used to assist NCFCCC in establishing priorities and planning for future regional cancer control activities.

The report is also useful for healthcare professionals, researchers, grant writers, cancer stakeholders and anyone interested in the region’s latest cancer statistics.

**North Central Florida Cancer Report 2013** can be downloaded from the publications page of WellFlorida’s website at [www.wellflorida.org](http://www.wellflorida.org).

One of Florida’s five regional Cancer Control Collaboratives, NCFCCC’s purpose is to improve access to cancer care and reduce the burden of cancer in North Central Florida. To learn more about NCFCCC, please contact Lauren Pollock at [lpollock@wellflorida.org](mailto:lpollock@wellflorida.org) or 352-313-6500 x 115. Oversight and leadership of NCFCCC is provided by WellFlorida Council. To learn more about WellFlorida, please visit [www.wellflorida.org](http://www.wellflorida.org).

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