

For nearly three decades, the Cancer Information Service has served as a national resource for information and education about cancer, translating cancer information into language the public can easily understand. As the “public voice” of the National Cancer Institute (NCI), the CIS is the source for the latest, most accurate cancer information for patients and their families, the general public and health professionals. Through regional offices located nationwide, the CIS serves all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The South Central CIS Regional Office, based at The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas, serves Texas and Oklahoma.

Partnership Program

The CIS is committed to providing information about cancer to as many people as possible, with special emphasis on reaching minority and medically underserved populations. To effectively reach diverse populations, the CIS partners with national, state and regional organizations that directly serve these audiences. By pooling resources to reach common goals, the CIS and its partners can effectively design programs with wider reach and greater impact.

CIS Partnership coordinators conduct tailored trainings on a wide variety of cancer topics; help partners access and use NCI cancer information, resources and materials; help plan, implement and evaluate cancer education programs; and assist with coalition-building and networking. CIS Partnership coordinators are especially relied upon for their expertise in the areas of clinical trials education, smoking cessation, breast and cervical cancer screening and Consumer Health Profiles (CHPs). An NCI resource, CHPs consist of maps and demographic profiles that help partners identify local groups in need of cancer information and suggest ways to develop effective outreach programs.

Research Activities

With its direct link to thousands of callers and its extensive network of partners, the CIS is a valuable and unique research partner. CIS regional offices collaborate with researchers to study the most effective ways to communicate with people about health lifestyles, health risks and options for preventing, diagnosing and treating cancer.

For more information on how to become a partner with the CIS, or to learn more about the programs described, contact Ginny Thompson, Sr. Partnership Program Coordinator, at 713-792-3363 and/or at gthompson@mdanderson.org.

Contact Center (1-800-4-CANCER)

Many situations can create a need for information about cancer – a diagnosis, news of a scientific discovery, a community cancer education event. Callers to 1-800-4-CANCER reach experienced cancer information specialists who can answer their questions about cancer screening, risks, symptoms, diagnosis and treatment, as well as clinical trials and support organizations. The information is based on NCI’s computerized Physicians’ Data Query (PDQ) cancer database. CIS information specialists also can provide callers with free NCI educational materials, personalized clinical trial searches, and assistance with navigating cancer resources on the NCI’s Web site. The CIS answers calls in English and Spanish Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Callers with TTY may call (1-800-332-8615). CIS services are also available online via LiveHelp, at www.cancer.gov, from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The CIS can also help people quit smoking with free, individualized telephone assistance through the NCI’s Smoking Quitline at **1-877-44U-QUIT** (1-877-448-7848) from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.