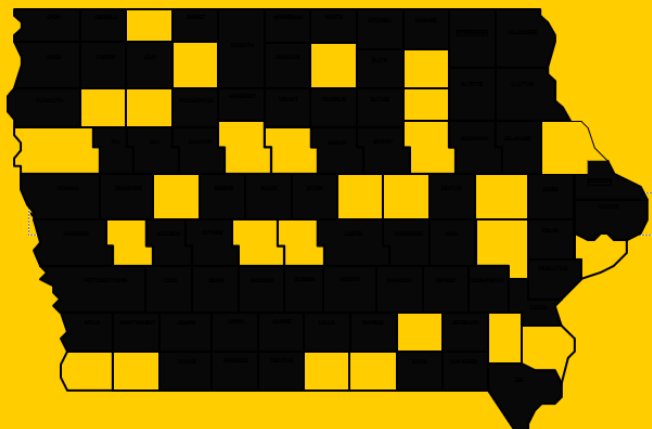


# Community Outreach & Engagement

**IOWA**  
HEALTH CARE

Holden Comprehensive  
Cancer Center



**NATOSHIA M. ASKELSON, MPH, PHD**

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, COMMUNITY & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**

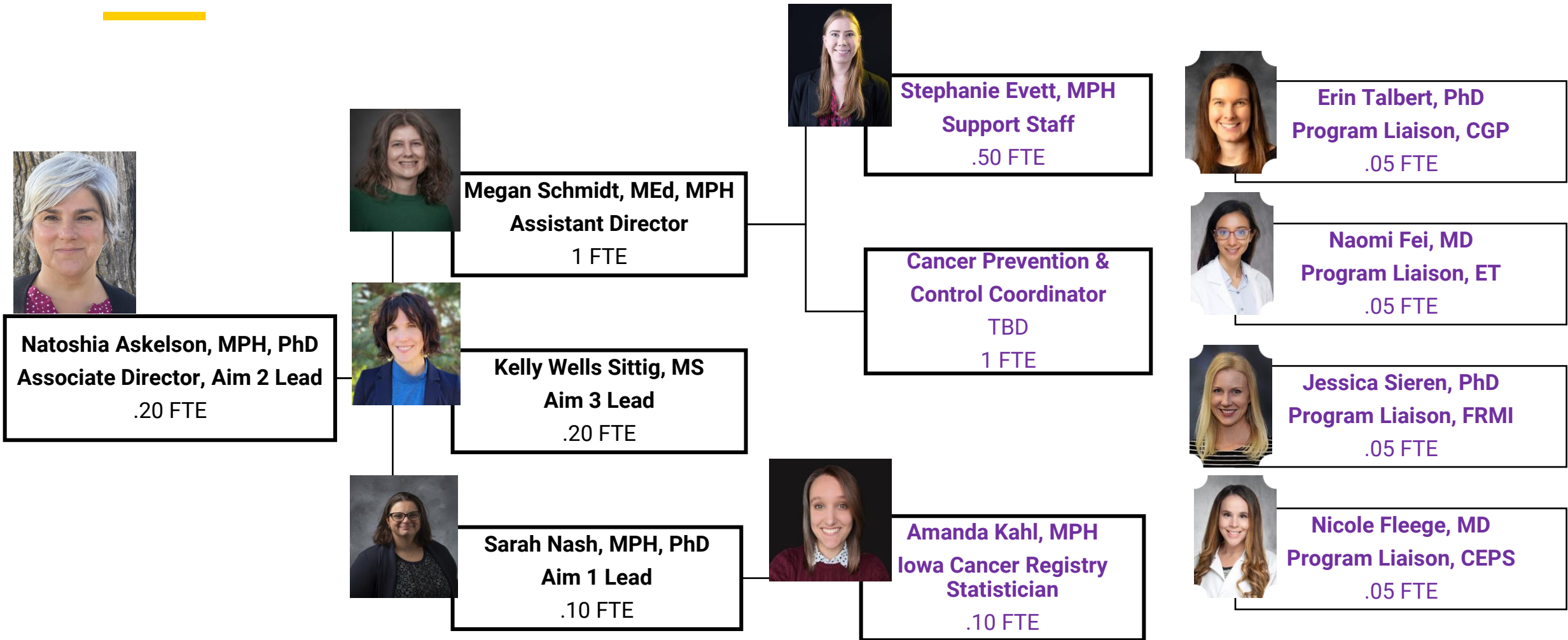
**DIRECTOR OF THE RESEARCH AND EVALUATION CORE, INSTITUTE  
FOR PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE, RESEARCH, AND POLICY**

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH &  
ENGAGEMENT, HOLDEN COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER**



CHANGING MEDICINE.  
**CHANGING LIVES.®**

# COE Team



# Cancer Control Partners in Iowa

State Government

Governor

Legislature



**Comprehensive Cancer Control Program**

**Breast & Cervical Cancer Program**

**Colorectal Cancer Screening Program**

**Bureau of Environmental Health Services**

**Local (County) Public Health Services/Boards of Health**

**IOWA HEALTH CARE**

Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center



**Health systems, hospitals, and clinics across Iowa**



**Iowa Cancer Action Network**

**ACS Iowa**



**Iowa Cancer Consortium**



**UI Research Centers**



**CHEEC**

Center for Health Effects of Environmental Contamination



# 2023 EAB Feedback

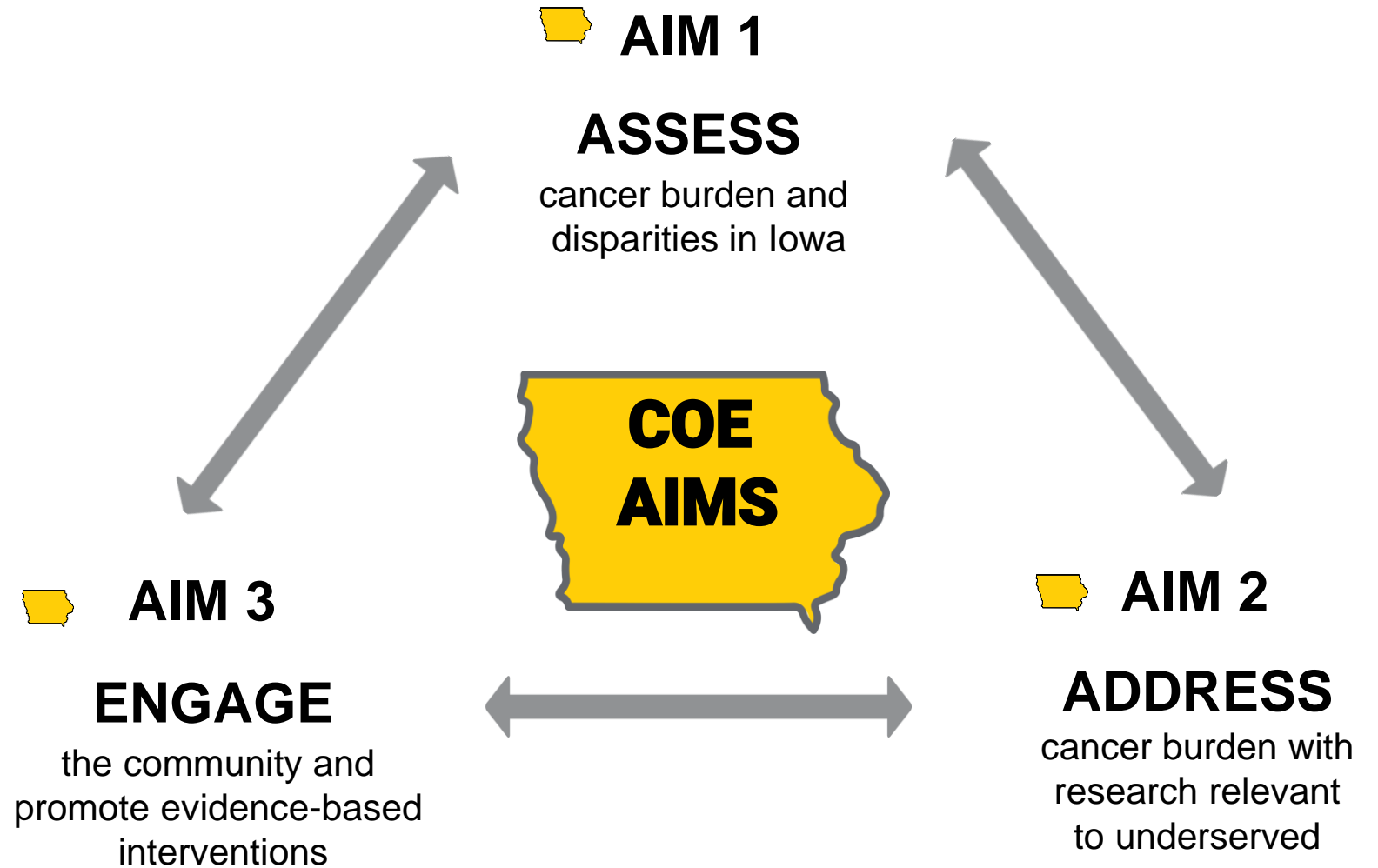
## Strengths noted by EAB

- + Superbly qualified COE leadership with potential to be effective
- + Responsive to CCSG & EAB
- + Solid plans in place for catchment area survey
- + COE activities are aligned and guided by logic model

Opportunity/Recommendation	Response
Consider revising the aims to better call out COE's role in fostering research that addresses the catchment area's particular needs and addresses cancer disparities.	✓ In process of revising aims for renewal
Consider further development of logic model with quantifiable evaluation metrics.	✓ COE team has revised logic model & added additional metrics
Better articulate catchment area priorities and how COE works with research programs	✓ Have catchment area priorities, Program Liaisons developed & implemented
Complete work with CAB & leadership to identify priorities	✓ Completed
Impact of COE program liaisons needs to be articulated	✓ Program Liaison role formalized
Consider initiating COE pilot research funding program and better align PED and COE activities within the FOA	✓ COE is incorporated into revised Oberley funding
Further investigation into Iowa's #2 ranking is a top priority	✓ Expert Advisory Panel, Governor's funding proposal
Engage with ACS CAN to help address this issue.	✓ Holden engages with ACS CAN & ICC Policy Workgroup; work directly with elected representatives, including Governor's office
Relatively low level of resources devoted to COE.	✓ 2 year budget increase (1.5 FTE to 3.3 FTE)
Tell stories and describe how COE is addressing increasing cancer incidence rates, prevalent cancer risk factors, cancer health disparities, lack of progress in cancer screening rates	✓ 99 Counties ✓ Lung Cancer P3 ✓ Expert Advisory Panel

# COE Goal & Aims

Alleviate Iowans' cancer burden by activating researchers and the population in assessing and addressing community-aligned priorities



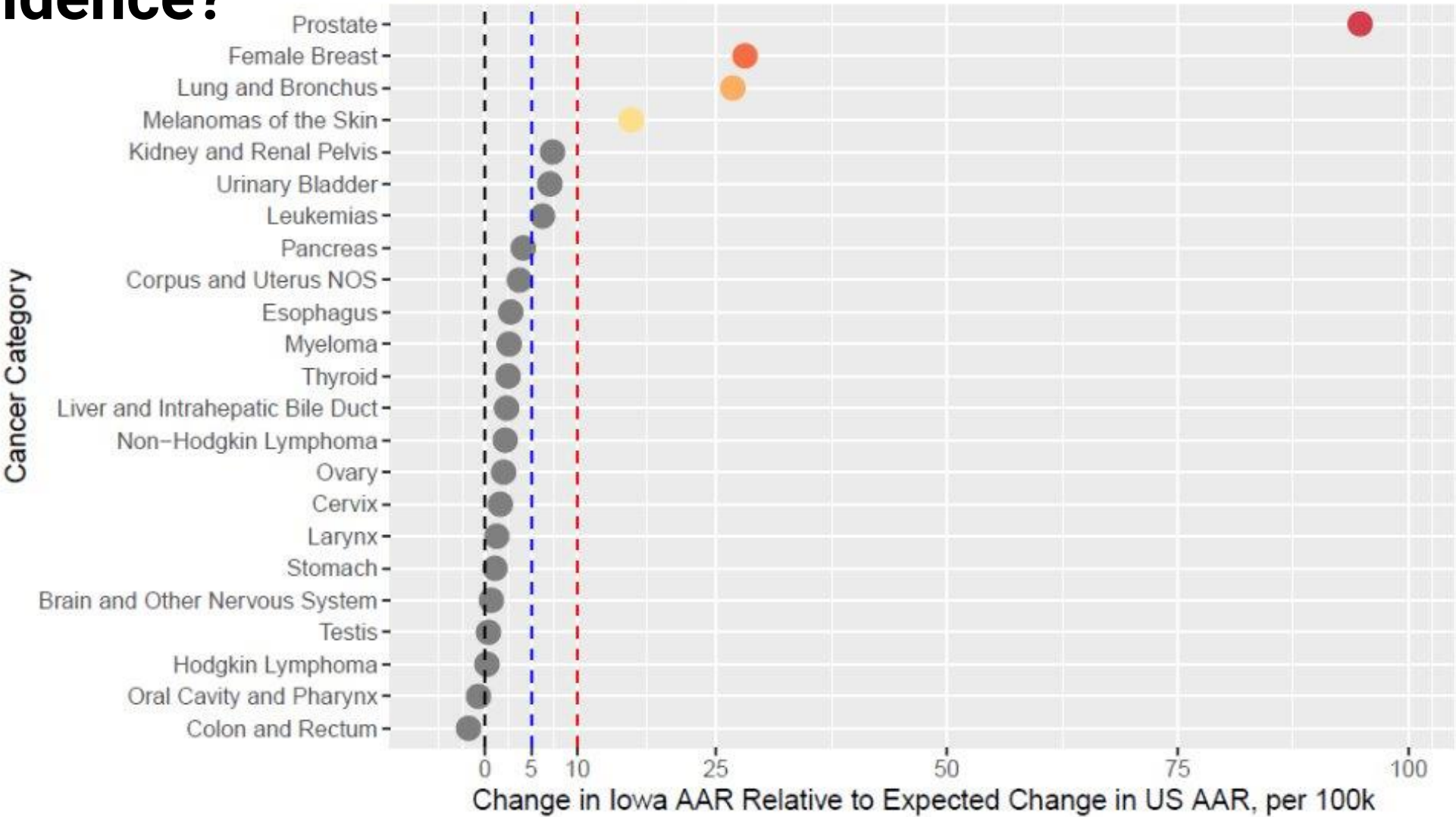


# What cancers are driving Iowa's high incidence?

Nash, S.H. (March 2024) *Iowa has the second highest cancer rate in the US*. Public Health of Iowa Conference. Des Moines, IA.

Nash, S.H., Mahoney, C., Brown, G.D., Charlton, M., & Oleson J.J. (January 2025). *Exploring drivers of excess cancers: An example from Iowa*. Poster presentation, Catchment Area Data Excellence, Coronado, CA.

Figure 1.1: Difference between US and Iowa Trends across years 2004–2021



# Why is this happening?

## Not likely explanations:

- lowans are old.
- lowans are screening more.
- lowans are more rural.

## Possible explanations:

- Alcohol
- Tobacco & radon
- Physical activity, nutrition & obesity
- Genetics
- Environment

# What are we doing about this?

**Informing public health, policy makers, and Iowans (Aims 2 & 3)**

**CAB**

**99 Counties Project**

- Researchers from ALL programs participating

**Convening Blue Ribbon Panel**

- **Blue Ribbon Panel Planning Committee:** Iowa Cancer Consortium, Iowa Cancer Registry, Iowa Health & Human Services, UI College of Public Health, UI Health Care Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center (Askelson, Burkard, Charlton, Henry, Lehmler, Nash, Parker)

**Impact**



**Media Coverage on Cancer in Iowa Report**

1/1-12/31/2024: 774

1/1-3/5/2025: 740



**Funding from governor**



**Number of Bills Introduced**

Nash, S.H., Schramm R. & Wells Sittig K. (April 2025) *Iowa's Cancer Crisis: How Local Public Health Departments Can Help & The state of cancer in Iowa*. Public Health of Iowa Conference. Des Moines, IA.



# Community Advisory Board Guiding Questions

Do patients face significant barriers to cancer treatment, screening, or trials around this priority?

Is this priority a preventable cancer or related to a preventable cancer?

Does this priority address a health inequity or correct an imbalance in Iowa?

Is this priority a leading cause of cancer incidence in Iowa?

Are there communities and partnerships that are ready to engage around this priority?

Is this priority a leading cause of mortality in Iowa?

Is the incidence rate of this priority area rising in Iowa?

Is this priority a screenable cancer or related to a screenable cancer?

## How is Holden incorporating the guiding questions?

Identification of cancer priorities

Incorporation into strategic plan

Internal funding awards

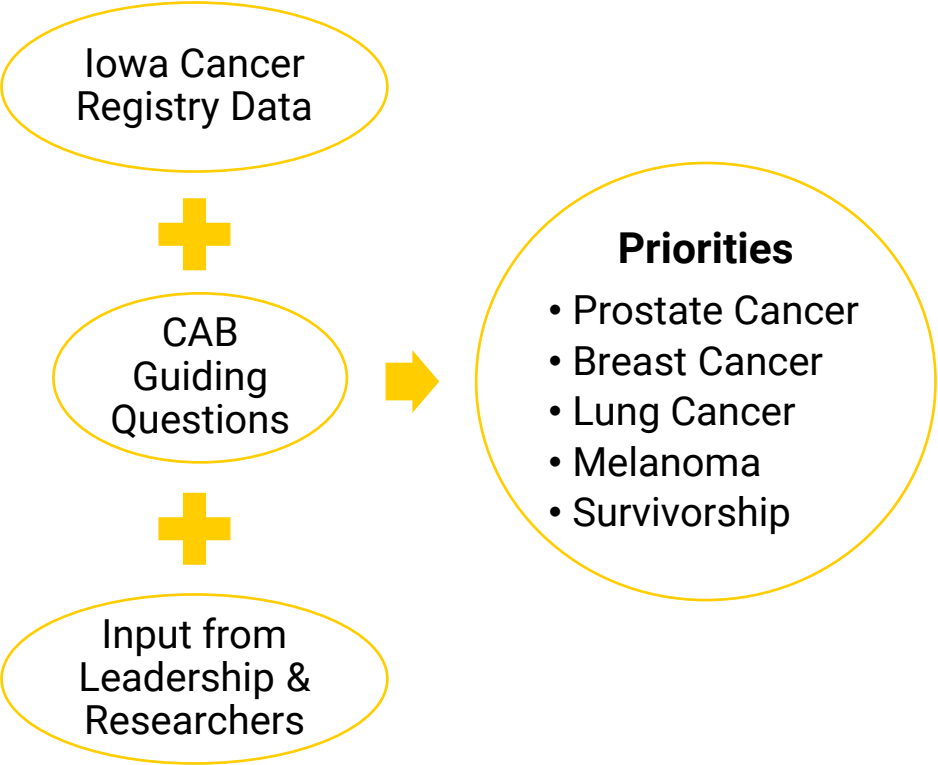
COE Opportunity Assessment Tool

Community pilot funding

Evett, S., Schmidt, M., Meyer, M., Kahl, A., Charlton, M., Nash, S., Wells Sittig, K., & Askelson, N.M. (March 2024). *Multi-method approach for understanding a cancer center catchment area needs and establishing priorities*. Poster presentation, American Society of Preventive Oncology, Chicago, IL.

Evett, S., Schmidt, M.E., Nash, S.H., Wells Sittig, K., University of Iowa Health Care Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center Community Advisory Board, & Askelson, N.M. (in press). Shaping cancer center priorities through Community Advisory Board collaboration. *Research Involvement and Engagement*.

# Determining Priorities



# Addressing Priorities

## All priorities

- Expert advisory panel (Askelson, Burkard, Charlton, Henry, Lehmler, Nash, Parker)
- Funding from governor (Parker, Charlton, Askelson, Vander Weg)
- 99 Counties project (Charlton, Nash, Zahnd, Askelson)
- Internal funding
- Cancer risk messages (Askelson, Vander Weg)
- Cancer research funding legislation (Dickens, Weiner)

## Prostate cancer: 13 researchers

- Project Health
- ACE Toenail Project (Kim)

## Breast cancer: 34 researchers

- Black Hawk County Health Equity Steering Committee
- Recruited Wendt, Burkard, Huang

## Lung cancer: 19 researchers

- Lung cancer P3 grant (Vander Weg, Charlton, Askelson)
- Radon legislation (Field)
- Tobacco legislation

## Melanoma: 9 researchers

- Tanning bed legislation (Powers)
- Cerro Gordo Melanoma Advisory Board (Milhem, Powers)
- Provide sunscreen for Iowa Cancer Consortium's sun safety initiative (Milhem)

## Survivorship: 10 researchers

- Survivorship surveys (Gorzelitz, Phadke, Seaman)
- Survivorship webinar series (Huber-Keener, Lizarraga, Seaman, Fleege, Talbert, Gorzelitz, White, Hill, Sieren, Aburizik, Grumbach, Gordon)

# Aim #1 Assess: Survivorship Surveys

## Internal Partners:

- **CEPS:** Jess Gorzelitz, Sneha Phadke, Aaron Seaman
- **Family Medicine:** Jeanette Daly
- **Urology:** Brad Erickson

## External Partners:

- Cancer Support Community
- MercyOne Des Moines
- Van Diest Medical Center
- Iowa Primary Care Association
- Cervivor
- Splash of Color

Reviewing literature to identify existing surveys and frameworks

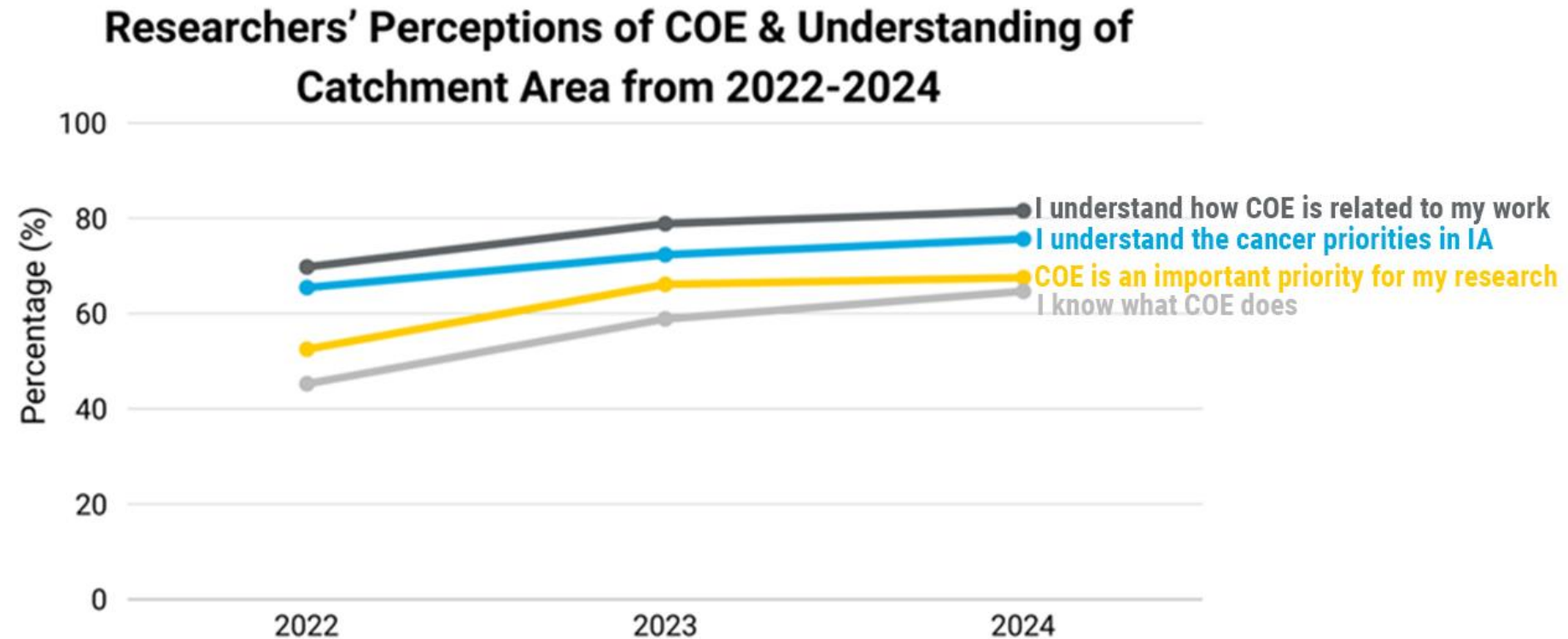
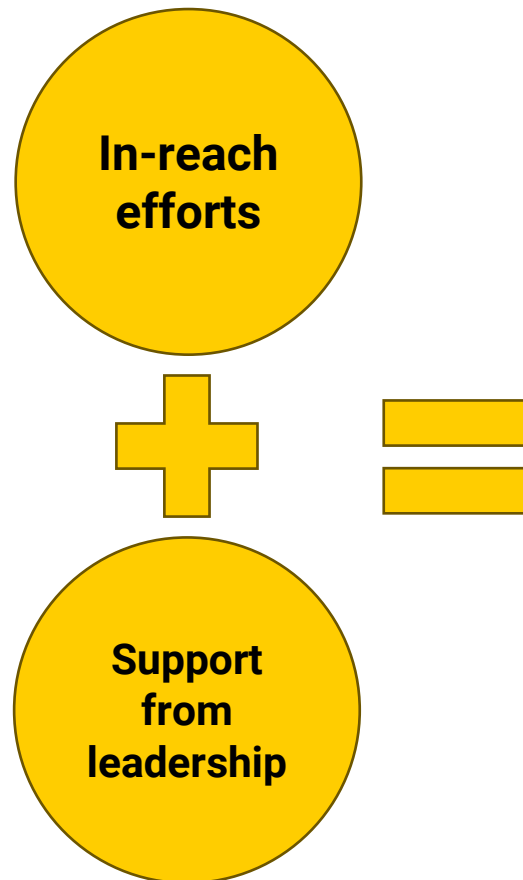
Engaging internal and external partners across Iowa to provide input on surveys and recruitment methods

Surveys will provide important information about cancer survivorship in Iowa, including unmet needs and research hypotheses

Statewide Cancer Survivor Survey

Statewide Primary Care Provider Survey

# Aim #2 Address: In-reach



Since last EAB, COE team has presented catchment area data and/or COE information at Csomay Community of Scholars, Breast Cancer Symposium, Holden REC meeting, Holden Research Seminar Series, Holden Annual Scientific Retreat, College of Public Health Epidemiology Seminar, Graduate Engagement Corps, UI Community Engagement Network

# Aim #2 Address: Clinical Trials Advisory Board

## Goals

Assess barriers to clinical trial enrollment at Holden and other sites across the state

Assess barriers to opening more clinical trials at Holden and across the state

### Participating Organizations

- Genesis Medical Center
- Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Iowa Academy of Family Physicians
- Iowa Cancer Consortium
- Mission Cancer + Blood
- St. Anthony Regional Hospital

### Participating Holden Faculty & Staff

Askelson (CEPS), Berg, Dickens (CEPS), Furqan (ET), Jones-Bitterman, McKay, Phadke (CEPS), Schmidt, Sieren

## Outreach

- Webpage hosted on Iowa Cancer Consortium Site: <https://canceriowa.org/resources/clinical-trials/>
- News release about website picked up by state and local media
- Collaborative panel presentation at Iowa Cancer Summit

## Collaboration

- Continue to meet monthly to share updates, share best practices, and problem solve
- Currently trying to understand and address low enrollment of women in cancer clinical trials

# Aim #2 Address: Program Liaisons

## Goal:

- Strengthen relationships between COE and programs to ensure COE knows more about COE-related work in programs and programs know more about the work of COE.

**CGP**  
Erin  
Talbert,  
PhD

**ET**  
Naomi  
Fei, MD

**FRMI**  
Jessica  
Sieren,  
PhD

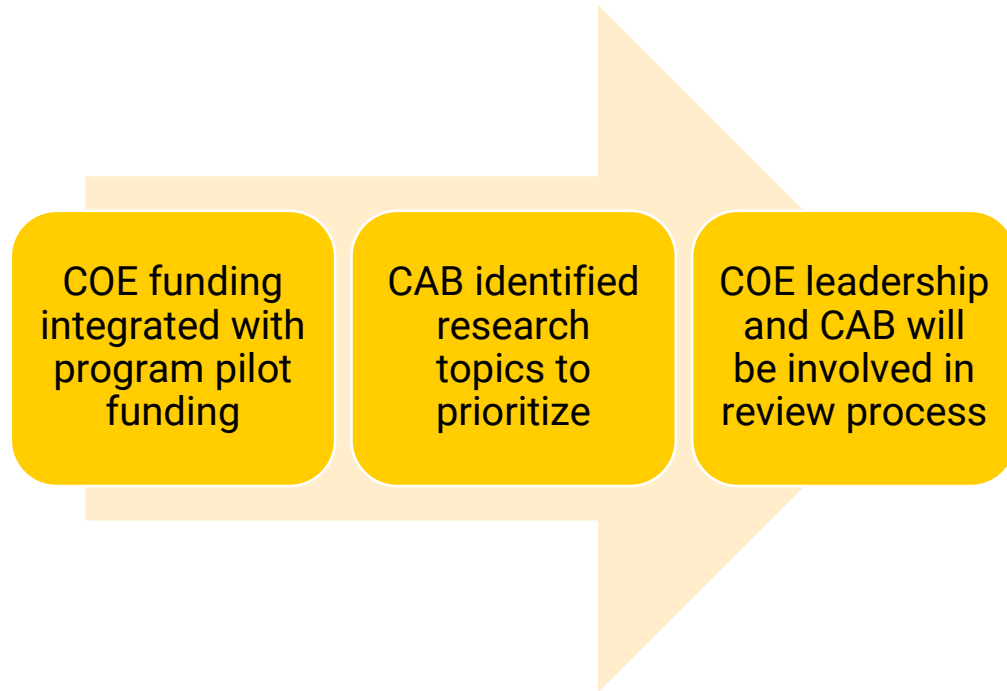
**CEPS**  
Nicole  
Fleege,  
MD

## Examples of Input & Support:

- Co-developed description of program liaison duties
- Brainstormed ideas to promote COE supplemental funding
- Connected COE team to webinar speakers & experts on colorectal cancer and survivorship
- Identified researchers working on catchment area priority cancers
- Identified researchers to participate in CAB meetings and connect with CAB members
- Participate in CAB meetings and provide input on agendas and activities
- Will be involved in community grant funding process



# Aim #2 Assess: Oberley Funding



## Research topics identified by CAB:

- Survivorship, including roles of primary care, caregivers
- Studies of priority cancers including breast, prostate, lung, melanoma
- Prevention, including obesity, nutrition, physical activity, radon, tobacco, alcohol
- Screening, especially informatics-based, lung cancer, and prostate cancer in black men
- Studies of genetic testing and counseling
- Improving clinical trial participation
- Cancer etiology, especially environmental

# Aim 3 Engage: Colorectal Cancer & Survivorship Webinar Series

- Met with internal & external partners to understand their needs and interests

## Listening Sessions

## Implementation

- Webinar series created highlighting topics identified by partners
- Sessions highlight an internal & external speaker (10 min. each) and discussion (40 min.)

## Webinar Goals:

- Establish & strengthen relationships
- Increase understanding
- Facilitate development of collaborative action & research plan

## Colorectal Cancer Series

CRC Topics	# Holden Participants	# Community Participants
Data & screening programs	24	25
Screening	15	14
Takeaways from ACS NCCRT	10	11
Fecal immunochemical tests	10	9
Early-onset	12	11
Genetic counseling	14	18
Screening at Proteus	11	13
Clinical trials	9	4
Rectal cancer	14	14
Screening & surveillance colonoscopies	11	4
Screening best practices & basic science	11	10

## Impact

Continued conversations about barriers & potential ways to collaborate

Reserving overbook colonoscopy timeslots for underserved patients

Schmidt, M., Wells Sittig, K., Nash, S., & Askelson, N.M. (October 2024). *Using a webinar series to create relationships: Engaging Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center researchers and state partners to address the burden of cancer in Iowa*. Poster presentation, Cancer Center Community Impact Forum, Salt Lake City, UT.

## Survivorship Series

Survivorship Topics	# Holden Participants	# Community Participants
Overview of cancer survivorship in Iowa	23	18

## Upcoming Survivorship Webinar Topics

- Mental & emotional health
- Pediatric survivorship
- Brain fog/Chemo brain
- Nutrition
- Physical Activity
- Surveillance
- Support groups
- Sexual health
- Holistic services

# Aim 3 Engage: Black Hawk County Health Equity Steering Committee



NCI supplement to improve partnerships between community, cancer coalitions, and cancer centers

Reviewed Iowa Cancer Registry data & determined areas of interest during NCI supplement

Continue to provide input on Holden researcher projects (Thiel)

Continue to attend and meet with researchers at Holden Annual Scientific Retreat (Thiel, Strouse)

Continue to seek experts and speakers for educational events (Burkard, Thiel, Campbell)

Held educational breast cancer event in Waterloo

Continue to meet monthly & currently implementing self governance



## Current Committee Members

Lisa Ambrose, *CEO & Executive Director, Amani Community Services*

Tiffie Greer, *Medical Assistant, MercyOne Waterloo*

Georgia Hodge, *Founder of F.R.I.E.N.D.S and Black Hawk County Community Outreach Worker, Iowa Cancer Consortium*

Lischelle Oliver, *Medical Assistant, MercyOne Waterloo*

Bridget Saffold, *Founder, Focus on Diabetes and Nurse Supervisor, MercyOne Waterloo*

Miriam Tyson, PhD *Former Holden CAB Member, Community Volunteer*

Williams ANT, VanArsdale A, Hirschey R, Askelson N, Nash SH. Experiences of Racism in Health Care and Medical Mistrust Shape Cancer Prevention and Control Behaviors Among Black Residents of Black Hawk County, Iowa: A Qualitative Study. *J Racial Ethn Health Disparities*. 2024 Oct 8. doi: 10.1007/s40615-024-02199-3. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39379789.

# Aim 3 Engage: Project Health

## NCI Supplement

- Creation of Black Hawk County Health Equity Steering Committee
- Relationships formed between Black Hawk County, Iowa Cancer Consortium, and Holden



## Interest in Prostate Cancer Disparities

- Steering committee reviewed cancer data & determined areas of interest
- Experts presented screening guidelines & disparities data



## Project Health: Community-led Data Collection, Education, & Outreach

- Small group of members created survey, collected data, and conducted outreach & education (n = 132 surveys, 3 events)
- Initial data presented to Holden researchers at annual retreat

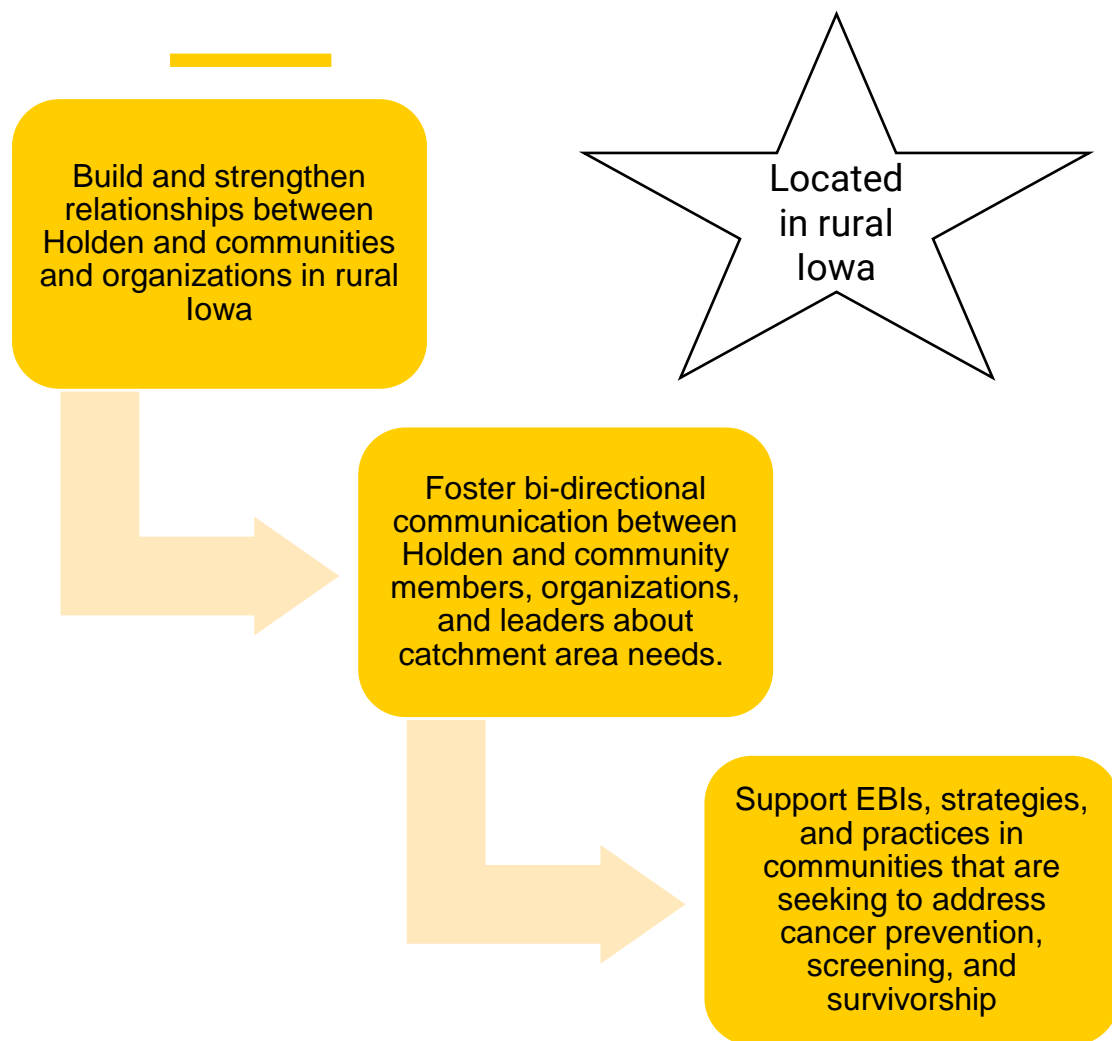


## Continued Collaboration & Support

- Holden agreed to fund additional data collection (n = 94, 9 events)
- Data presented to Holden research during seminar series
- Holden provided funding for representative to attend at present poster at CCCIF in Salt Lake City
- Infographic on COE website and report in progress



# Cancer Control Coordinator



# Community Pilot Grants

Will be available for community partners that are interested in implementing an evidence-based intervention

Partners will be encouraged to collaborate with Holden researchers and/or staff, when appropriate, for expertise and support

Projects must relate to catchment area priorities, CAB guiding questions, and Iowa Cancer Plan priorities

CAB and program liaisons will assist with proposal review

# COE & CRTEC Integration



Members of the Emerging Leaders Council are participating in the 99 Counties Project



CAB provides input on CRTEC programming



COE provides input on speakers for CRTEC-led seminar & retreat



CRTEC collaborates with COE on STEM education and outreach

Activities	COE	CRTEC
Community Advisory Board	☆	✓
Communication Training	☆	✓
UI COE/HCCC COE Speaker Event	☆	✓
CRTEC Advisory Board	✓	☆
Emerging Leaders Council	✓	☆
HCCC Scientific Retreat	✓	☆
HCCC Research Seminar Series	✓	☆
ACS Institutional Research Grant	✓	☆
ACS DICR SHE in Oncology	✓	☆
Career Development Series	✓	☆
Annual Researcher Survey	✓	☆
Regular Meetings/Communication	☆	☆
Strategic Planning	✓	✓
Iowa Cancer Consortium	✓	✓
99 Counties Project	✓	✓

## Key

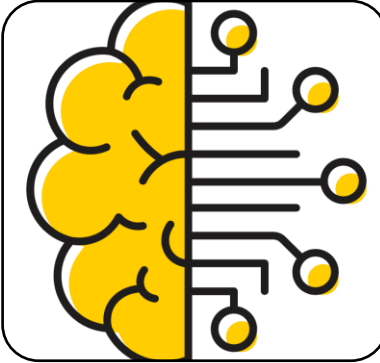
☆ = Leading activity

✓ = Collaborating in activity

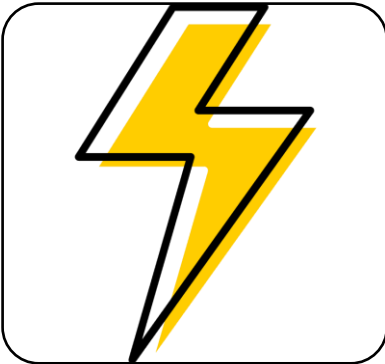


# Discussion

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How well are we demonstrating integration of COE throughout the cancer center?



How can we better demonstrate impact?