

## New Mexico Cancer Council Satisfaction Survey Results

### Introduction

The New Mexico Cancer Council (Council) plays a vital role in the development and implementation of the New Mexico Cancer Plan. Each year Council members are invited to complete a satisfaction survey regarding their Council membership. The survey's purpose is to help gauge Council success and member attitudes, which will assist with planning or modifying Council priorities and actions in the upcoming year and improving the Council's work process.

The 2010 Satisfaction Survey was available online and consisted of 11 questions. The first three questions requested general information about respondents. A fourth question asked respondents to indicate the sectors they or their organization(s) represented (e.g., advocacy group, education, public health). One question asked respondents to rank satisfaction with the Council. Information on workgroup participation was obtained through responses to three questions. The survey included three open-ended questions: one solicited general comments about Council participation, one asked respondents to suggest one change that

could be made to the Council to increase engagement, and one provided the opportunity to share individual comments, suggestions, or observations about the Cancer Council.

### Respondent Information

- A total of **21** out of a potential of **100** Council members responded to the survey, yielding a **21% response rate**.
- **43%** of the respondents were **Executive Committee** members.
- **81%** of the respondents have been **Council members for over three years**.
- **68%** of the respondents **represent an organization**.

### Council Participation

Respondents were asked to rank 11 statements about their Council participation according to a 4-point Likert scale that ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Results are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Council Participation**

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Response Count
Participation on the Council has helped me/my organization develop collaborative relationships with other agencies.	0%	15%	50%	35%	20
Participation on the Council has helped me/my organization move toward meeting its goals.	0%	20%	60%	20%	20
Participation on the Council has helped me/my organization to build collaborative skills.	0%	15%	75%	10%	20
Being a member of the Council has helped me/my organization gain credibility in my field.	0%	20%	65%	15%	20
Attending Council meetings is a good use of my time.	0%	15%	60%	25%	20
I feel valued by other Council members.	0%	11%	72%	17%	18
People and organizations in the Council work well together.	5%	15%	55%	25%	20
I am satisfied with my role in the Council.	0%	20%	60%	20%	20
I feel I have adequate input into the decisions made by the Cancer Council regarding policy, group activities, etc.	0%	25%	45%	30%	20
The recommendations from last year's satisfaction survey (including changing the by-laws so that general Council members can vote) have been adequately implemented.	0%	6%	67%	28%	18
The Council's membership adequately represents diverse populations within the state of New Mexico (race, ethnicity, rural, gender, age, etc.)	0%	26%	63%	11%	19

## Sector Representation

Respondents were asked to **select the sector(s) they or their organization represented**. Results from 20 respondents are presented in Table 2. The 3 “other” responses were identified as Individual, Survivorship, and Health Insurance Plan. There was no representation from commercial/private business, school, faith-based, or media sectors among respondents.

**Table 2. Sector Representation**

Sector Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Advocacy group	10%	2
Policy	10%	2
Support	25%	5
Education	50%	10
Tribal	10%	2
Government	10%	2
Research	20%	4
Patient Care	30%	6
Public health	30%	6
Health foundation	10%	2
Special populations (race, ethnicity, gender, etc.)	30%	6
Other (please specify)	15%	3

## Council Workgroup Membership

Respondents were asked to **identify all the workgroups in which they participate** (more than one could be specified); 16 of the 21 survey respondents specified membership in the Council workgroups listed in Table 3.

**Table 3. Workgroup Representation**

Workgroup	Response Percent	Response Count
Albuquerque Cancer Coalition	13%	2
Colorectal Cancer Workgroup	38%	6
Native American Workgroup	25%	4
Policy and Advocacy Workgroup	31%	5
Public Relations Workgroup	19%	3
Rural Issues Workgroup	31%	5
Survivorship Workgroup	31%	5

Respondents who participate in a workgroup were asked, **“What do you most value about your**

**membership?”** – 11 responded to this question.

Responses included:

- “Focus on specific issues and different perspectives of other members. Movement towards accomplishing objectives.”
- “Collaboration, shared experiences among members, common goal of improving life.”
- “I value the opportunity to interact with others in the State who are working to improve the psychosocial and practical issues involved with cancer as they affect the patient/survivor as well as her/his loved ones.”
- “Opportunity to advance actions in needed areas.”
- “Advocacy for the population that I serve.”
- “Working with a group of committed individuals; producing something with tangible results that directly supports Cancer Plan objectives.”
- “Being able to craft information materials regarding the Cancer council and cancer in general.”
- “Networking opportunities.”

If not involved in a workgroup, respondents were asked **what would motivate them to become involved**. Only 3 responded as follows:

- “I am very motivated to get involved and have signed up for the PR workgroup several times but have not received any communication from them.”
- “I have had a difficult time making meetings; I hope to be more active in the upcoming year.”
- “Survivorship or rural issues.”

## Suggestions for Improving the Cancer Council

The last two survey questions were open-ended, allowing respondents to write in their comments.

In the first open-ended question, respondents were asked, **“What one change could be made to the Cancer Council that would help you become more engaged in the Council?”**

Suggested changes to the Cancer Council included:

- “I would like to see a better system of teleconferencing that allows for more meaningful participation.”
- “Creating more and different ways for Council members to really get to know each other so that when meetings are held there is more of a sense of working together.”
- “Better enforcement of reports from members of their activities to support the plan and report back to the council.”
- “Shorter meetings and a clearer goal.”

The final question read **“Please use this field to share with us any other comments, suggestions, or observations you have about the Cancer Council.”**

Three people provided the following comments:

- “I would like to see a meaningful coalition of individual members who are cancer survivors representing the needs and concerns of survivors.”
- “I am not sure "broadening the base", as mentioned previously in the survey, is necessarily a good thing. People seem to be all over the map about what they want to do and thus there doesn't seem to be a consensus about the purpose of the council. I find it difficult to be engaged because I have no idea where we are headed.”
- “The Council is an incredible group of people.”

Comments were also provided by those who selected “disagree” or “strongly disagree” to any of the 11 statements ranked under a Likert scale. Suggestions for improvement were provided in this open-ended opportunity for commentary:

- “I feel there is room for improvement in the area of diverse representation.”
- “I do not think the goals for the organization are clearly stated and thus it is difficult to say if we are accomplishing them. I think that it is a tall order to expect "collaborative relationships" from a group that has such disparate ideas about cancer needs in the state. I think we need to spend time, as a group, discussing why we meet and what our

role is. Just having a forum for discussion may be the reason we get together- I just think we need to come to a consensus.”

- “We are already a respected organization. There is still a lot of territorialism going on in the Council.”
- “I think it would help to draw a more diverse membership if the Council could identify tangible benefits for joining. Maybe we need to consider that the benefits that would appeal to nontraditional members may be different from what current members perceive as the benefits of participating.”
- “We need more survivors, members from rural areas, members from more diversified backgrounds. It is getting better but we still need to improve.”
- “There have been no offers or discussions on integrative oncology approaches used by other states and recognized cancer treatment centers...why is that?”

Of the 11 statements ranked under a Likert scale, the two that received the highest percentages of “agree” and “strongly agree” rankings were:

- “I feel valued by other Council members” (**89%** “agree” or “strongly agree”).
- “The recommendations from last year's satisfaction survey ..... have been adequately implemented” (**95%** “agree” or “strongly agree”).

## Conclusion

Results of the 2010 Cancer Council Satisfaction Survey demonstrate overall satisfaction among respondents. When ranking satisfaction with their participation on the Council (using a Likert scale), the majority either “agree” or “strongly agree” with the positive statements reflecting the value of Council membership.

There was overwhelming agreement that respondents feel valued by other Council members and that their recommendations from last year’s survey had been implemented. Such positive response demonstrates the value in including members in all aspects of Council activities, from planning to implementation through reporting, and recognizing the importance of their input.

Participation in workgroups is a valuable experience according to comments provided by those who are workgroup members. Respondents find workgroups valuable because they:

- allow interaction with others, collaboration, and networking;
- focus on specific issues, accomplish objectives, and produce something with tangible results;
- provide the satisfaction of working with a common goal to improve life for cancer patients, survivors, and their families; advocate for the population served; and advance actions in needed areas.

The open-ended questions resulted in suggestions for improvement. Common themes included:

- Improve meetings (i.e., teleconferencing, shorter meetings, different schedules).
- Clarify goals
- The need for diverse representation

Recommendations to address these common themes are provided below.

## Recommendations

Only 21% of the New Mexico Cancer Council members contributed to the 2010 Satisfaction Survey. This is not

a large enough sampling to obtain a consistent evaluation of Council member attitudes and views. Efforts should be taken to increase the response rate by considering the use of a different data collection method (such as interviews) or by including different questions. Higher participation in the next survey will enable the Council to take the necessary steps to improve the Council’s processes and membership base.

Of those who did respond, the majority express satisfaction with their membership on the Council. Council members should continue to work together, value and respect one another, and consider all suggestions.

The Council should continue to work with members to schedule meetings to meet the needs of the majority of members. Also, workgroups should relay the meeting schedule or publish contact numbers for those who wish to join and participate in workgroup efforts.

The goals and objectives for the Council should be clarified. This is currently an ongoing process. The collaboration of all members on the upcoming revision of the Cancer Plan is an opportunity to reach consensus regarding goals and objectives of the Council.

There are benefits to having diverse representation on any committee, workgroup, or Council. The Council should consider recruitment efforts to increase membership, in general, which may result in a more diverse membership base.