

Why Cancer Patient Advocates Promote Voter Registration

Voting has a significant impact on health care outcomes, say the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and Vot-ER.

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The [American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network](#) (ACS CAN), a nonprofit organization that advocates for evidence-based public policies to reduce the cancer burden for everyone, and [Vot-ER](#), a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization working to integrate civic engagement into health care, are teaming up on National Patient Advocacy Day to empower patients to take an active role in decisions that affect their health by registering to vote and making their voices heard this November.

While roughly [83% of adults](#) in the United States will visit a health provider in the next year, an estimated [80% of health outcomes](#) are determined beyond clinic walls. Voting has a significant impact on health care outcomes, including reducing health disparities, a reality that resonates deeply with both patients and their health care professionals. These synergies have led ACS CAN, the nation's leading cancer patient advocacy organization, and Vot-ER, to coordinate efforts and bridge the gap between health care and civic engagement.

“The decisions lawmakers make have a clear and significant impact on our fight against cancer,” said Lisa Lacasse, president of ACS CAN. “ACS CAN is proud to be part of this collaboration with Vot-ER to empower patients to make their voice heard at the ballot box. Patient advocates have paved the way for key legislation like reducing tobacco use, improving access to health coverage and increasing cancer research funding, and their voices continue to be critical as we work to end cancer as we know it, for everyone.”

“Patient advocates and health care providers must play a role in promoting voting among patients,” said Vot-ER patient advocate Gilanie De Castro, MSN, RN, OCN, NE-BC, president-elect of the Greater Los Angeles Chapter of The California Chapters of the Oncology Nursing Society and an Interim Sr. Regional Nursing Director (San Gabriel Valley) at the City of Hope. “Encouraging people to vote—especially those whose lives have been touched by cancer—is a powerful way for oncology nurses and patient advocates to improve care and health outcomes. By engaging in the voting process, we can influence public policy that directly impacts the challenges faced during a cancer diagnosis.”

[Research shows](#) that communities are healthier when more voters can participate in the democratic process. States with more inclusive voting policies and higher civic participation rates have better health outcomes. Together, ACS CAN and Vot-ER are committed to lifting up patient voices to create healthier communities.

For more information on ACS CAN's efforts to help people register to vote and find their polling place, visit fightcancer.org/vote.

For more on Vot-ER's work, visit vot-er.org.

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