Healthy People. Healthy Communities.

Breast Cancer in South Carolina 2000-2019: A 20 Year Snapshot of Women 50 Years or Older

INCIDENCE

Over the past 20 years, the incidence of invasive breast cancer in South Carolina for women 50 years or older has increased from 337 cases per 100,000 in the 5-year rate from 2000-2004 to 353 cases per 100,000 in the 5-year rate from 2015-2019 (Figure 1.). This follows overall national trends of increases in the incidence of breast cancer for women of all ages. Black women have had a consistently lower incidence of breast cancer than White women; However, the overall incidence for Black women has experienced a net increase over the past 20 years while White women have experienced a net decrease (Figure 2).

STAGE AT DIAGNOSIS

A significant amount of public health resources has been aimed at increasing the proportion of age-eligible women receiving breast cancer screenings. These efforts have demonstrated to be successful as the overall incidence of breast cancer diagnosed at earlier stages has increased (208.4 per 100,000 to 234.3 per 100,000). At the same time, the incidence of late-stage tumors has decreased (110.6 per 100,000 to 107 per 100,000). Unfortunately, these same results are not shared by race (Figure 3.). Black women had a late-stage diagnosis incidence of 121.6 per 100,000 while for White women the incidence was 107 per 100,000 in the 5-year rate from 2000-2004. The late-stage incidence for White women has experienced a net decrease while Black women have experienced a net increase from the 5-year rate from 2000-2004 (100.6 per 100,000 vs 126.6 per 100,000).

MORTALITY

Improvements in early cancer detection and cancer treatment therapeutics have played a major role in improving the survival from breast cancer. Nationally, the mortality rate for all women diagnosed with breast cancer has decreased from 51 deaths per 100,000 in 2000 to 34 deaths per 100,000 in 2019. This same trend has been observed in South Carolina. For women 50 years or older, the 5-year mortality rate from 2000-2004 decreased from 75.6 per 100,000 between to 63.4 per 100,000 in 20015-2019 (Figure 4). While both Black and White women have experienced declining mortality rates over the past 20 years, these declines have not completely closed the racial disparity mortality gap observed. Black women have experienced a greater net decline in breast cancer mortality (14 deaths per 100,000 vs 12 deaths per 100,000) than White women; however, the current mortality rate for women remains far lower for White women (58.7 deaths per 100,000) than for Black women (77.9 deaths per 100,000).

COUNTIES

While South Carolina has made significant strides in the effort to reduce the morbidity and mortality of breast cancer, it is equally important to examine the burden of breast cancer at the county level. Charleston, Richland, Pickens, and Chester counties have consistently had some of the highest breast cancer incidence rates over the past 20 years (Figures 5 & 6). In contrast, Jasper, Berkley, Lee, Saluda, McCormick, and Abbeville County have had the lowest incidence rates. Cherokee and Union County have made significant improvements over the past 20 years as both counties had some of the highest mortality rates between 2000-2004 to having some of the lowest between 2015-2019 (Figures 7 & 8).

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Figure 1. Breast Cancer Incidence Women 50+

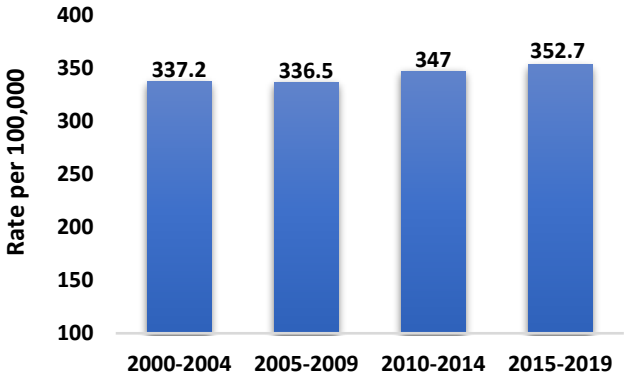

Figure 2. Breast Cancer Incidence By Race Women 50+

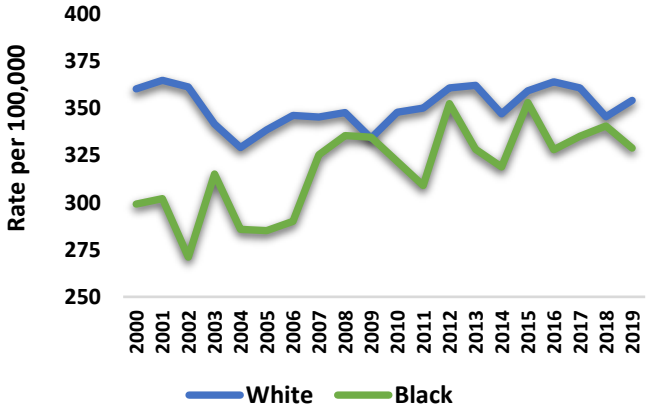

Figure 3. Breast Cancer Incidence At Late Stage Women 50+

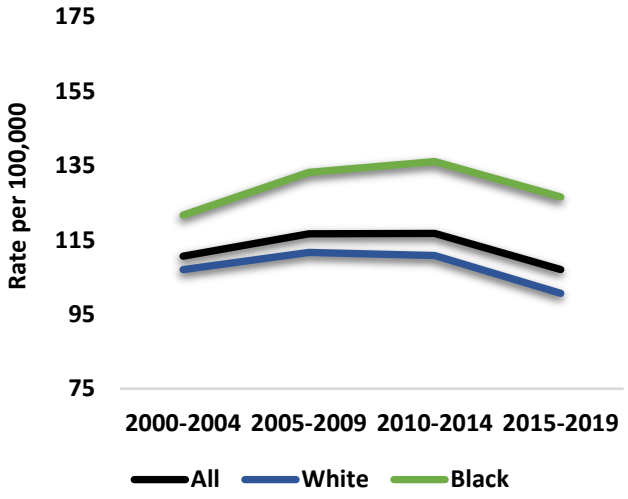

Figure 4. Breast Cancer Mortality Women 50 +

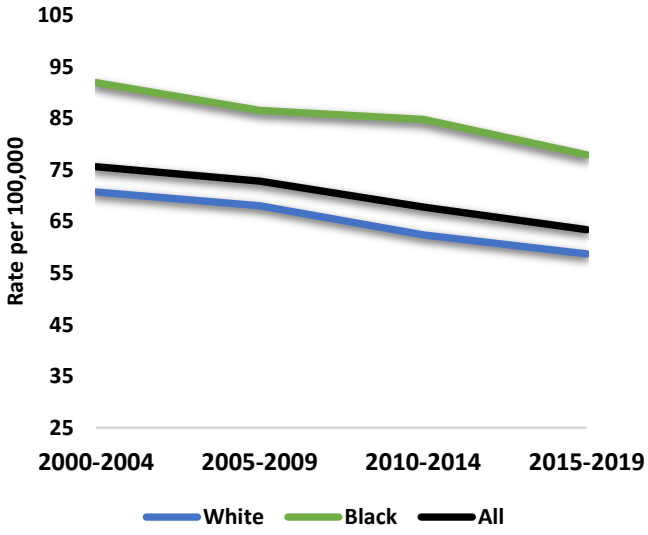

Figure 5. County Level Breast Cancer Incidence 2000-2004

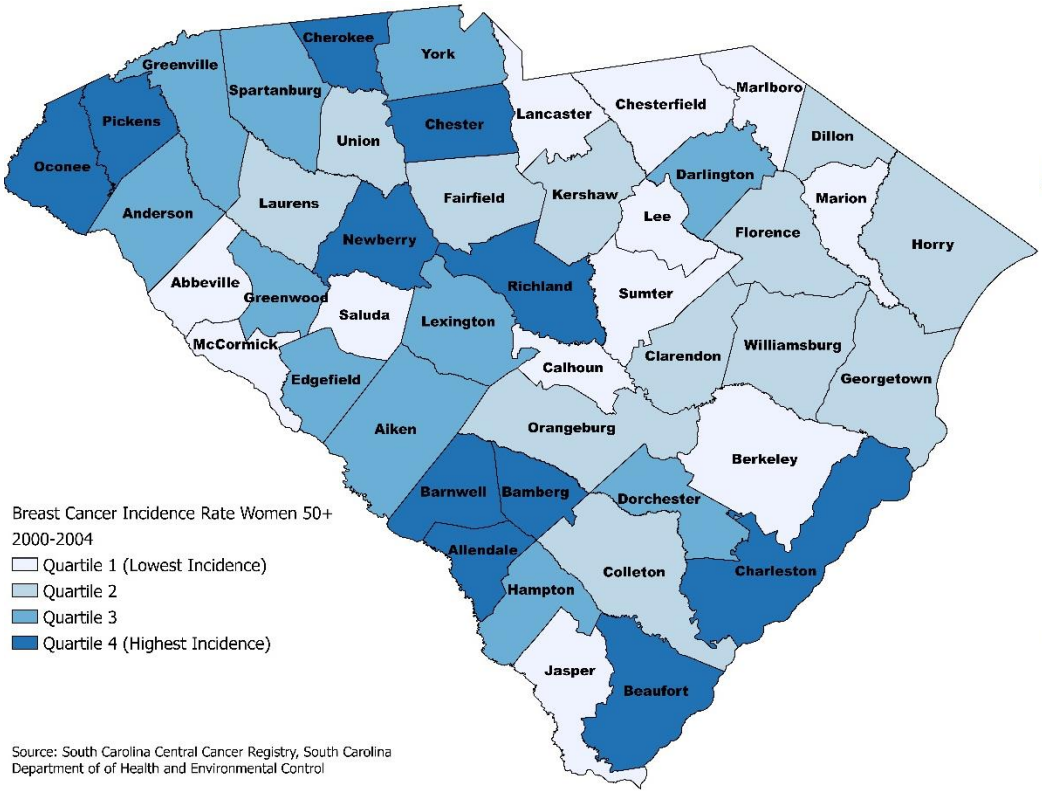

Figure 6. County Level Breast Cancer Incidence 2015-2019

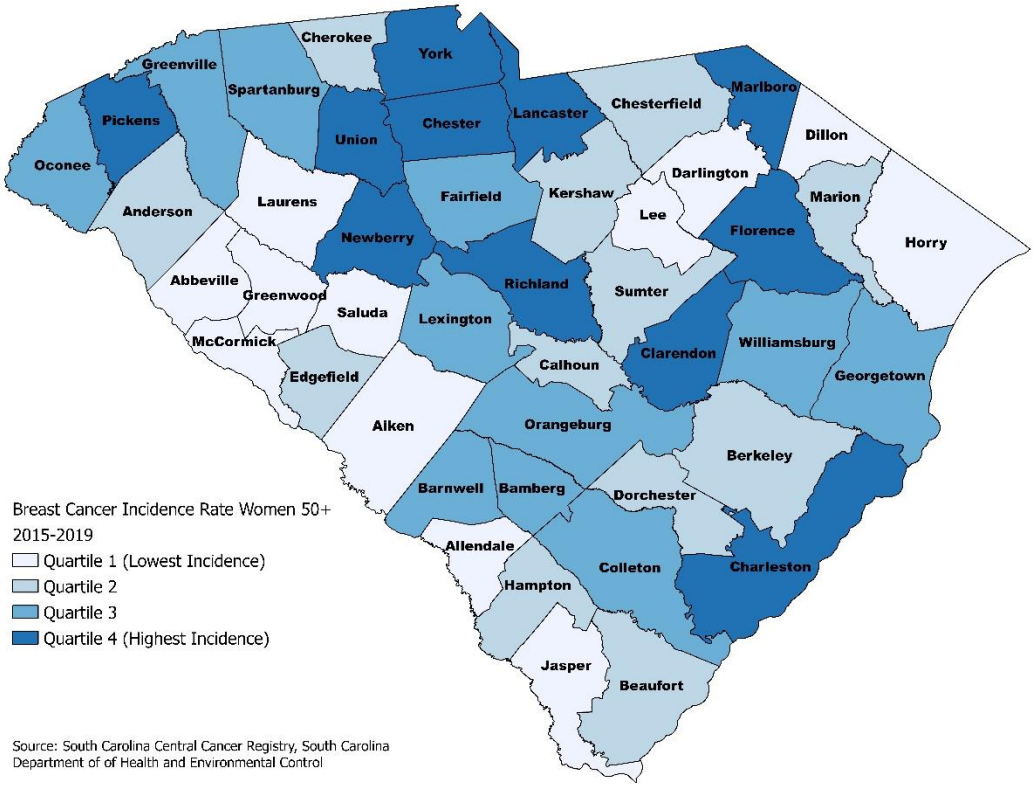

Figure 7. County Level Breast Cancer Mortality 2000-2004

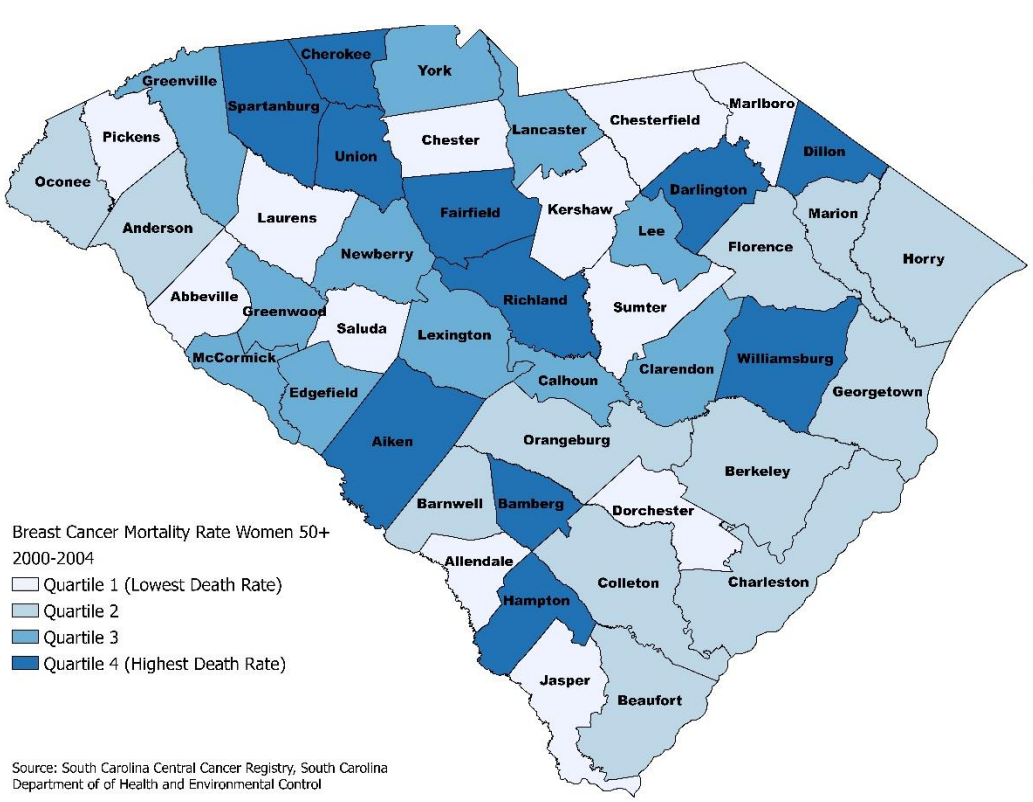

Figure 8. County Level Breast Cancer Mortality 2015-2019