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Cancer mortality in white and black men and women in nursing and personal care facilities in four states

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BACKGROUND: Workers in nursing and personal care facilities may be exposed to potential carcinogens, including microbials, chemical exposures, radiation and physical hazards. **METHODS:** This study investigated cancer mortality among those employed in broad occupational groups in nursing and personal care facilities in four states using proportional mortality ratios. Age-adjusted proportionate mortality ratios (PMRs) were computed with 95% confidence intervals (CI) using U.S. age-, gender-, and race-specific proportional mortality ratios for 1984-1998. Proportional cancer mortality ratios were also calculated for comparison to the proportional mortality ratios. **RESULTS:** Statistically significant increased PMRs and PCMRs in nursing and personal care facilities were found for lung cancer in black females in managerial and professional specialty occupations in Pennsylvania, rectal cancer in black men in service occupations in Ohio, ovarian cancer in white women in technical and administrative occupations in South Carolina, and cervical cancer in white women in service occupations in Pennsylvania. A statistically significant increased PMR but not PCMR was found for brain cancer in white women in managerial and professional specialty occupations in North Carolina. **CONCLUSIONS:** The present study suggests that workers in nursing and personal care facilities have elevated risks of several cancers. These findings should be followed up with more detailed examination of occupational risk factors and evaluation of preventive practices for such workers.

Learning Objectives: At the conclusion of the session, the participant (learner) in this session will be able to: 1. Discuss or identify elevated cancer mortality results for occupations within nursing and private care facilities for several states 2. Recognize how the numbers of individuals in an occupational category in the nursing and private care facilities industry for a state can limit the chance of observing an elevated cancer mortality result 3. Develop for a given state a list of occupations within nursing and personal care facilities suitable for more detailed examination of occupational risk factors and evaluation of preventive practices for such workers.

Keywords: Cancer, Surveillance

Related Web page:

Presenting author's disclosure statement:

Organization/institution whose products or services will be discussed: None

I do not have any significant financial interest/arrangement or affiliation with any organization/institution whose products or services are being discussed in this session.

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