

Florida Cancer Data System (FCDS) – St. Lucie County Glioblastoma FAQ

What is the Florida Cancer Data System (FCDS)?

The Florida Cancer Data System (FCDS) is a statewide cancer registry legislatively mandated to collect data on all cancers diagnosed in Florida per Section 385.202 Florida Statute. The FCDS has been collecting the number of new cancers (i.e. incidence) diagnosed each year statewide since 1981. The FCDS is used to observe cancer trends and provide a research base for studies into the possible causes of cancer.

What type of cancer related data does FCDS collect and how is it used?

Two hundred thirty hospitals statewide report approximately 115,000 newly diagnosed cancer cases per year to FCDS. At this time, the FCDS database contains over 3,400,000 cancer incidence records. However, there are limitations to using FCDS data to address cancer concerns. Although FCDS data can be analyzed by select geographical area, these data represent a retrospective account of the burden of cancer for the area of concern. The FCDS collects outcome data. The data submitted by hospital and non-hospital reporters to the FCDS describes “who”, “what”, “when”, and “where” of the cancer case. However, the FCDS does not collect data as to “why” nor can analyses of FCDS data alone determine why the occurrence of cancer in a specific area or population is happening.

Although cancer is a serious and frightening diagnosis, it is a common disease. Current information shows that approximately one out of three Americans will develop cancer in their lifetime, and cancer will affect three out of four families. The risk of developing cancer increases with age (with the increased risk starting at age 40), so as the population ages, more cases of cancer are expected in our communities.

What did the FCDS assessment find in regards to recent concerns in St. Lucie County?

Given recent community concern, the FCDS conducted a local-level assessment of glioblastoma cancer occurrence (i.e. number of cases) among Florida residents diagnosed between 1996 and 2015 in St. Lucie County to better understand the existing pattern of this cancer. **From this assessment, no statistically significant excess of glioblastoma was found in any of the local areas of St. Lucie County.** This assessment also showed that the occurrence of glioblastoma cancer in all local areas in St. Lucie County mirrored what is to be expected given the population size and demographics. On average, each year there were 10 new glioblastoma cases for the entire St. Lucie County reported to the FCDS during the time period from 1996 to 2015. The majority of these cases were reported among adults age 60 or older.

What are the next steps?

Moving forward, the Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie County will continue to work with state central office and other state and local partners to review other relevant public health data to better understand the occurrence of glioblastoma locally and address the needs of our local residents.

For more information on the Florida Cancer Data System, please visit fcds.med.miami.edu/inc/welcome.shtml