

# Dying from cancer: Could your location determine your fate?

By **LINDSEY TANNER**  
Associated Press

Health Metrics and Evaluation. "We should be going forward, not backward."

## Stark differences

Stark differences in regional cancer death rates have been found in previous research, but this one stands out for providing detailed estimates for deaths from nearly 30 types of cancer in all 3,100 U.S. counties over 35 years.

From 1980 to 2014, the U.S. death rate per 100,000 people for all cancers combined dropped from about 240 to 192 — a 20 percent decline. More than 19 million Americans died from cancer during that time, the study found.

The picture was rosiest the Colorado ski country, where cancer deaths per 100,000 residents dropped by almost half, from 130 in 1980 to just 70 in 2014; and bleakest in some eastern Kentucky counties, where they soared by up to 45 percent.

"We all know this is unacceptable ... in a country that spends more than anybody else on health," Mokdad said.

The Affordable Care Act took effect in the study's final years and emphasized prevention services including no-cost screenings for breast, colorectal and cervical cancers. Any resulting benefits wouldn't be evident in the latest results, since cancer takes years to develop. It's unknown whether similar coverage will be part of the replacement system the Trump administration and congressional Republicans are seeking.

An editorial published with the study by Stephanie Wheeler, a University of North Carolina health policy specialist and Dr. Ethan Basch, a University of North Carolina cancer specialist, notes that many areas with the highest cancer death rates also strongly supported Donald Trump, "raising hopes that future policies devel-

oped by the incoming administration will provide resources" for these communities.

Researchers estimated county death rates using U.S. government death records and U.S. Census Bureau data. Results were published Tuesday in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

## Better understanding

Ahmedin Jemal, an American Cancer Society researcher, said better understanding variations in cancer death rates will help target cancer prevention and control.

Among the more striking disparities:

—In counties with the highest 2014 cancer death rates, six of the top 10 were in eastern Kentucky. Six of the 10 lowest rates were in the Colorado Rockies.

—For lung cancer deaths, four of the five counties with the highest 2014 rates were in eastern Kentucky, with rates

up to 80 percent higher than in 1980. Three of the five counties with the lowest 2014 rates were in the Colorado Rockies, where rates dropped by up to 60 percent.

—Death rates for breast and colorectal cancers increased in Madison County, Mississippi, and in 2014 were at least five times higher there than in Summit County, Colorado, where the rates fell. These are among cancers that can be successfully treated if detected early.

Smoking, obesity, physical activity and income explain many of the disparities, said study co-author Dr. Christopher Murray, also at the University of Washington.

But the study also raises questions. For example, relatively high rates of testicular cancer were found in parts of Southern California and far southern Texas for reasons that are unclear. Since treatments for this rare cancer are

extremely effective, "almost nobody should die of testicular cancer," Murray said.

The poor showing for eastern Kentucky contrasts with wealthier parts of the state and "is tremendously troubling," said Ben Chandler, president of the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky, a nonpartisan group that funds health policy research and advocacy.

Chandler cited poor access to health care and high smoking rates and said the disparities highlight a need for statewide smoke-free laws. The foundation funded a study that found that Kentucky's 2014 Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act covered costs for many cancer-related preventive health measures including mammograms and colon cancer screenings.

How that expanded access will fare under the health care law's expected repeal "has been of great concern to us," Chandler said.

# Oscars go gaga for 'La La Land' with record-tying 14 nominations

Musical a hit with viewers and critics

By **JAKE COYLE**  
Associated Press

The candy-colored love letter to musicals "La La Land" landed a record-tying 14 Academy Award nominations on Tuesday, while a notably more diverse field of nominees brushed off two straight years of "OscarsSoWhite" backlash.

"La La Land" matched "Titanic" and "All About Eve" for most nominations ever, earning nods for best picture, stars Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling, its jazz-infused songs and its 32-year-old writer-director, Damien Chazelle.

In stark contrast to the last two years of all-white acting nominees, seven actors of color were nominated out of the 20 actors. A record six black actors were nominated ("Fences" stars Denzel Washington and Viola

Davis, Mahershala Ali and Naomie Harris of "Moonlight," Ruth Negga of "Loving" and Octavia Spencer of "Hidden Figures"), as was Dev Patel, the British-Indian star of "Lion."

A trio of acclaimed films led the overhaul, foremost among them Barry Jenkins' luminous coming-of-age portrait "Moonlight." Its eight nominations, including best picture, tied for the second most nods. Denzel Washington's fiery August Wilson adaptation "Fences" and Theodore Melfi's crowd-pleasing African American mathematician drama, "Hidden Figures," were also showered with nominations, including best picture.

Jenkins, who was nominated for directing and adapted screenplay, said the nominations for "Moonlight" and other films showed that people were eager to put themselves in the shoes of others.

"I love the American film industry and to see it this year, I feel, really reflect the world that we all live and work in, it



Dale Robinette/Lionsgate

**Ryan Gosling, right, and Emma Stone in a scene from, "La La Land." The film was nominated for an Oscar for best picture on Tuesday. The 89th Academy Awards will take place on Feb. 26.**

gives me hope," Jenkins said by phone from Amsterdam.

## Best picture

Nine films out of a possible ten were nominated for best picture. The others were: Denis Villeneuve's cerebral alien thriller "Arrival," Kenneth Lonergan's New England

family drama "Manchester by the Sea," the West Texas heist thriller "Hell or High Water," the "Lion," and Mel Gibson's World War II drama "Hacksaw Ridge."

The biggest surprise of the morning was the strong boost of support for Gibson, who had long been shunned in Hol-

lywood since an anti-Semitic tirade while being arrested for drunk driving in 2006 and a 2011 conviction for domestic violence. Along with the best picture nod, Gibson scored an unexpected best director nomination. Gibson, whose ninth child was born Friday, said in a statement that nothing was more exciting than hearing the nominations read while holding my newborn son."

Andrew Garfield, who was nominated for best actor for his performance in "Hacksaw Ridge," said Gibson deserved the moment.

"I think finally people are remembering who Mel actually is, not what the tabloids (said)," said Garfield by phone. "I'm so, so proud of him."

"Arrival" tied "Moonlight" for the second most nominees with eight nods. Yet its five-time nominated star, Amy Adams, was left out of the competitive best actress category.

Instead, Meryl Streep, whom President Donald Trump recently derided as "overrated,"

landed her 20th nomination. Her performance in "Florence Foster Jenkins" was among the best actress nominees that included Stone, Natalie Portman ("Jackie"), Ruth Negga ("Loving") and Isabelle Huppert ("Elle"). Also left out was Annette Bening for "20th Century Women."

## Best actors

Best actor favorites Washington, Gosling and Casey Affleck ("Manchester by the Sea") were joined by Garfield and Viggo Mortensen ("Captain Fantastic"). Along with Ali and Patel, the best supporting actor nominees are Lucas Hedges ("Manchester by the Sea"), Michael Shannon ("Nocturnal Animals") and Jeff Bridges ("Hell or High Water").

Viola Davis, the supporting actress front-runner for her performance in "Fences," notched the expected nomination. Also up for the category are Harris, Spencer, Nicole Kidman ("Lion") and Michelle Williams ("Manchester by the Sea").

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