

## **Cancer in Native Hawaiian Women: Key Points**

### **Vital Statistics and Social Indicators**

- There are about 242,100 Native Hawaiian adults (Hawaiian or part Hawaiian) living in the United States.
- There are about 120,500 Native Hawaiian adult women.
- The Native Hawaiian population is young—about a third are younger than 18.
- Compared to other ethnic groups living in Hawaii, Native Hawaiians are relatively young, have large families, and have low levels of education and lower household incomes.
- Most Native Hawaiian women have health insurance through employment or public sources, though many are underinsured.

### **Cancer Rates, Mortality, and Risk Factors**

- Cancer incidence rates among Native Hawaiians are among the highest in the world, and are much higher than for any other ethnic group in Hawaii.
- The most common cancer among Native Hawaiian women is breast cancer, with an age-adjusted rate just below that for White women, and the second most common is lung cancer, which has the highest mortality rate of any cancer among Native Hawaiians.
- The only cancer site for which Native Hawaiian women have a lower risk than most other ethnic groups is colorectal cancer.
- High rates of obesity, high-fat and high-calorie diets, and tobacco use contribute to Native Hawaiian women's cancer risks.
- A high proportion of late-diagnosis breast cancer suggests that the use of available screening options—in this case, mammography—is lower than among other ethnic groups.

### **Data Limitations and Future Directions**

- It is difficult to estimate the denominators for calculating age-adjusted cancer incidence and mortality rates.
- There is a need for disaggregation of data from that of other Pacific Islanders.
- For some cancers, the small numbers of cases make interpretation a challenge.
- More data are needed about treatment patterns and outcomes, as well as survival patterns.