

Dear Fellow South Dakotans:

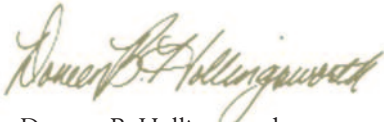
On behalf of the Department of Health, it is my pleasure to welcome you to this very special issue of *South Dakota Medicine*.

Each year, more than 3,800 South Dakotans receive a cancer diagnosis, and 1,600 die from cancer. The impact of cancer reaches deep and none of us are immune. This special edition features the four primary sites of cancer that are consistently diagnosed most often in our state.

In the world of cancer risk factors, prevention and treatment, patients understandably rely heavily on their physicians. Physician recommendations to reduce cancer risks by healthy lifestyle choices or to undergo available cancer screenings carry considerable weight. A cancer diagnosis can present patients and their families with overwhelming and unfamiliar medical decisions. As patients seek information and choose treatment plans, the advice of a trusted physician can provide much-needed support and solace. The purpose of this special issue is to arm physicians with information about cancer in South Dakota to help them, and in turn, their patients to prevent and control cancer.

The Department of Health welcomes the partnership of the South Dakota State Medical Association and others involved in cancer prevention and control as we work together to attain the ultimate goal of reducing death and illness due to cancer. It is an enormous job and requires the dedication of many. We are pleased to have joined in the effort of developing this special issue.

Sincerely,



Doneen B. Hollingsworth
Secretary of Health

