



## Leaders' Update

A message from Bernard Fuemmeler, associate director for cancer prevention and control

Dear Colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to write this letter in my new role as the associate director for cancer prevention and control. I feel honored and fortunate to assume this leadership role and join Massey and the vibrant VCU community.

There is much to admire about the cancer and prevention program here at Massey. With strong backing by the university and a longstanding and steadfast commitment from the cancer center, the cancer prevention and control program has become an exciting hub of innovative science. Research in areas such as tobacco control and regulation, cancer health outcomes, decision making, screening, energetics and cancer, survivorship and health disparities, among others, are active and flourishing here at VCU. It will be exciting to see the continued growth in cancer prevention science over the years to come.

Indeed, this is a great time to be a cancer prevention and population health scientist. Investigators are achieving a better understanding of how biology and social factors interact to influence cancer risk. Advances in data science and digital technology are now making it possible to better quantify biological, behavioral and social factors that occur in real-time in order to better understand what factors influence cancer risk for a particular person. Such advances are also making it possible to deliver the right intervention at the right time and in the right place. Further, health care reform is now more than ever embracing a proactive, value-based preventive approach over a reactive, break-fix model. Together these recent developments offer an unprecedented opportunity to accelerate cancer prevention science and produce meaningful changes in population health.

At VCU, we are uniquely positioned to take advantage of these emerging innovations. We have talented and collegial faculty, staff and students. We have strong programs in medical, biological and social sciences. And we have a genuine and meaningful partnership with our regional and state communities. It is clear to see how these assets will help Massey strengthen its capacity to improve the lives of cancer survivors in our catchment area and become national leaders in cancer prevention science.

I look forward to embarking on this mission with you and working with you to advance cancer prevention and control science here at VCU. In the coming months, I hope to learn more about the research you are doing and what you see as the potential opportunities for novel interdisciplinary science. I hope to be in touch soon, but please feel free to email me so we can have coffee and chat.

Sincerely,

Bernard Fuemmeler, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Associate director for Cancer Prevention and Control