



PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

Central Michigan District Health Department
"Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities"

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TO: Local Newspapers

FROM: Michele Wolfe- Health Educator- CMDHD

RE: Breast Cancer Awareness

RELEASE DATE: September / October 2011

Celebrate October as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in Michigan women. According to the Michigan Department of Community Health, there were 7,340 Michigan women newly diagnosed with invasive breast cancer in 2010. Last year, 1320 women died from the disease.

"Ninety-five percent of women that have breast cancer will be alive in 5 years, if it is discovered early," said Dr. Robert Graham, Medical Director of the Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD). "Women should get into the habit of doing a monthly self breast exam and seeing their doctor for a clinical breast exam every year," Graham added.

Early screening is estimated to reduce breast cancer deaths by 20-25%. This means you have the power to do something. Women are also encouraged to get screened for breast cancer through a mammogram. The Michigan Cancer Consortium recommends that women of average risk get an annual clinical breast exam and mammogram starting at age 40. "If all women age 40 and older took advantage of early detection methods –mammography plus a clinical breast exam – breast cancer death rates would drop much further," says Dr. Robert Graham, Medical Director. "The key to mammography screening is that it needs to be done routinely – once is not enough."

If you cannot afford a mammogram, you may qualify for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP). The local BCCCP provides free breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services to women who meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Have an income \leq 250% of the federal poverty level (e.g., a family of four can earn up to \$55,875 per year)
- Be uninsured
- Be between the ages of 50-64 with limited availability for ages 40-49

Women who are diagnosed with breast cancer through the BCCCP may be eligible to receive Medicaid for cancer treatment. Since the program began in 1991, over 419,000 women have been screened through the BCCCP; with over 3,378 breast cancers diagnosed.

For more information on the BCCCP, please call your local branch office of the Central Michigan District Health Department, 1-800-922-MAMM, or visit the health department's website at www.cmdhd.org. This article was provided to you by the staff at the Central Michigan District Health Department which serves residents in Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon Counties.

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