

# Fact Sheet



California Department of Health Services | Cancer Detection Programs: Every Woman Counts

## Cancer Detection Programs: Every Woman Counts

Since 1991, the Cancer Detection Section (CDS) has provided breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services to women. These services are provided free to women who qualify, thanks to the Breast and Cervical Cancer Mortality Prevention Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-354) and the California Breast Cancer Act of 1993.

*Cancer Detection Programs: Every Woman Counts* is a program built on a model originally created by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) comprised of six interdependent components: screening, tracking, follow-up and case-management; quality assurance and improvement; professional education; public education and outreach; surveillance and evaluation; and coalitions and Partnerships. The success and effectiveness of *Cancer Detection Programs: Every Woman Counts*, and the fight to eliminate health disparities in breast and cervical cancer for California's underserved low-income women, requires synergy across all six components.

*Cancer Detection Programs: Every Woman Counts* provides free clinical breast exams, mammograms, pelvic exams and Pap tests to California's underserved women. These women are age 40 and older (cervical cancer screening is provided to women 25 and older), have an income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level, and have limited or no health insurance—they are California's working poor.

Approximately 900,000 women are eligible for breast cancer screening services and more than 1,800,000 are eligible for cervical cancer screening services.

### Highlights of *Cancer Detection Programs: Every Woman Counts*

Screening, tracking, follow-up and case management, to reduce breast cancer mortality:

- Access to screening services is simple. Web-based enrollment applications can be completed right in the doctor's office.
- Tools and systems are available to help providers remind women to be screened every year, and to support follow-up with women who have abnormal findings.
- Over 1,000 primary care doctors and health care providers deliver comprehensive case management, from initial contact to completion of the periodic screening cycle. They coordinate and provide screening and/or refer to diagnostic and treatment services, to ensure the continuum of care for patients in *Cancer Detection Programs: Every Woman Counts*.
- Once a cancerous condition is found, breast and cervical cancer treatment services are available through the Medi-Cal program to women screened through *Cancer Detection Programs: Every Woman Counts* and others who qualify.

Quality assurance and improvement systems are essential to saving lives:

- Experts perform on-going medical record reviews to identify quality assurance issues, improve service delivery and develop innovative evidence-based provider training strategies.

*But it takes more  
than a  
mammogram...*

- Over 10,000 copies of breast diagnostic algorithms (pathways) have been distributed to primary care physicians. The algorithms incorporate new guidelines, research, and technologies, especially the interpretation of pathology, to help physicians provide prompt evaluation and timely discussion of results with women. The algorithms are available at [www.dhs.ca.gov/cancerdetection/healthprofessionals.htm](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/cancerdetection/healthprofessionals.htm).
- The booklet *A Woman's Guide to Breast Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment* is a valuable guide intended to help a woman become an informed partner in making choices with her health care team. In California, the law requires that the booklet be given to a woman before diagnostic or treatment services are performed.

Professional education improves the standards of practice:

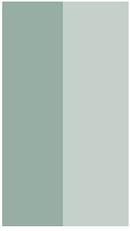
- Over 3,900 medical professionals have received state-of-the-art, hands-on, skills-based clinical breast exam and provider-patient communication training.
- Clinical breast exam training is provided in either a 5-hour interactive course or a 2-hour session in the provider's office, with self-study review.
- Over 7,000 interactive Breast Cancer Review CD-ROMs have been distributed. This tool is available at <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/cancerdetection/healthprofessionals.htm>.

Public education delivers innovative strategies for reaching the underserved:

- Award-winning, TV public service announcements with Maya Angelou and Phylicia Rashad, as well as Mother's Day promotions, reach women and motivate them to get screened for the sake of their families and themselves.
- Low-literacy educational materials are offered in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese.
- Hair stylists are trained to be lay health educators through an innovative outreach program called *Styling for Life*.
- A toll-free, consumer referral line (800-511-2300) is the only number of its kind in the nation to offer services in six languages. The toll-free number has received over 139,000 calls since 1995. Operating Monday-Friday, 9:00 am-7:00 pm, calls are answered in English, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, and Vietnamese.

Surveillance and evaluation provide feedback for accountability and to guide program improvements:

- Data from surveys assess breast and cervical cancer screening knowledge and behavior among California women, as well as other relevant behavioral, economic and social factors.
- A large (and growing) database involving more than 650,000 women, three million clinical services, and 6,000 providers is used to monitor and evaluate the quality of services, determine policy priorities, provide reports, and assess the impact of the program on the underserved in California.
- California is one of 14 states to receive federal funds to assess and reduce heart disease and stroke risk for low-income, uninsured women being screened for breast and cervical cancer. In California, this demonstration project, *Corazón de la Familia (Heart of the Family)*, will focus on reducing the risk of illness and death from heart disease among low income and uninsured Latina women ages 40-64. Also known as the *Well-Integrated Screening and Evaluation for Women Across the Nation (WISEWOMAN)* program, *Corazón de la Familia* offers assessment, patient education, counseling, referral and follow-up for heart disease risk factors. The project will be implemented in up to five clinic sites as a pilot, and may subsequently be expanded to additional clinic sites.



Coalitions and Partnerships create synergy for care and action:

A network of regional cancer detection partnerships work to make breast and cervical cancer a public health priority by bringing together local communities and developing collaborative relationships that provide:

- Outreach and support for women
- Client support services such as language interpretation, counseling, childcare, and transportation are offered to reduce barriers to care.
- Volunteer coalitions and ethnic specific task forces that advocate for and help ensure access, quality, and cultural relevance for the underserved.
- Support for physicians and health professionals
- Local networks for medical care are developed to reach all areas of the community
- Strategies to improve clinic management systems related to tracking, follow-up and rescreening are discussed with a volunteer coalition of experts
- Training and continuing education of health professionals is facilitated through the collaborative efforts of CDS and the regional cancer detection Partnerships

Regional cancer detection partnerships serve all 58 counties in California. A complete list of the Partnerships and contact information can be found on the CDS Web site, [www.dhs.ca.gov/cancerdetection](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/cancerdetection).

## *FUNDING*

Federal and state governments join together to fight breast and cervical cancer.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under the Breast and Cervical Cancer Mortality Prevention Acts of 1990 (Public Law 101-354).
- Funding from the Proposition 99 – Tobacco Tax and Health Promotion Act account.
- The California Breast Cancer Act of 1993 mandates 50% of the revenues collected from a 2-cent tax on tobacco products towards breast cancer control. While the program is growing to meet the needs of the large, under-insured and uninsured California population, the revenues from this tax are decreasing as Californians are smoking less.