



American Association on Health & Disability

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SUSAN G. KOMEN FOR THE CURE® AND AMERICAN ASSOCIATION ON HEALTH & DISABILITY (AAHD) WORK TOWARD

INCREASING MAMMOGRAPHY SCREENING FOR WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES IN THE DC METRO AREA

Q: What is being done in the DC Metro Area to make mammography screening more accessible for women with disabilities?

- The American Association on Health and Disability (AAHD) (<http://www.aahd.us>) in Rockville, Maryland, has received a grant for 2009-2010 from Susan G. Komen for the Cure® (<http://www.komen.org/>) to implement a comprehensive education and empowerment intervention for women with disabilities who face environmental, cultural, and linguistic barriers in receiving breast health care services at mammogram facilities in the Komen Race for the Cure® service areas of the District of Columbia, Prince George's County in Maryland, Alexandria City in Virginia, and Fairfax, Loudon, Arlington, and Prince William Counties in Virginia.
- AAHD staff will visit mammography sites and administer a comprehensive facility accessibility survey. AAHD staff will also address barriers by providing culturally and linguistically appropriate materials on prevention, breast self-awareness techniques, cancer risk factors, and screening, for clients and healthcare providers.
- This is a replicable project at the community/state level, and a portion of the project has already been successfully implemented in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Q: How many women in the United States are currently living with a disability?

According to the 2000 Census, almost 18 percent of the female population ages 16 to 64 or approximately 16 million women are living with a sensory, physical, or mental disability. This means that approximately 1 out of every 5 women receiving a mammogram might have a disability. In 2000 in Washington, D.C., 9.5% of the female population ages 16 to 64 and older or approximately 19,500 women are living with a sensory, physical, or mental disability.

Q: Do women with disabilities have more or less chance of developing breast cancer than women without disabilities?

- Women with disabilities have at least the same chance of developing breast cancer as women in general.
- Some women with disabilities may be at higher risk due to having certain risk factors such as obesity, less physical activity, lack of or delayed childbearing, radiation exposure, starting menstruation at an early age (before age 12) and/or going through menopause at a later age (after age 55), or delayed diagnosis due to barriers in obtaining preventive screening.(1)

Q: Do women with disabilities receive mammography screening more or less often than women in general?

- Data indicate that women with disabilities, especially those with significant physical limitations, receive mammograms less often than women without disabilities. (2)
 - Research suggests that this disparity may stem from environmental, attitudinal, and communication barriers. (3)
 - According to research, women with disabilities may be at higher risk of late-stage breast cancer and higher mortality, suggesting a relationship to lower screening rates. (4)
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- (1) "Women with Disabilities" Facts for Life Factsheet by Susan G. Komen for the Cure®
- (2) Chevarley FM, Thierry JM, Gill CJ, Ryerson AB, Nosek MA. Health, preventive health care, and health care access among women with disabilities in the 1994-1995 National Health Interview Survey, Supplement on Disability. *Womens Health Issues*. 2006; 16:297-312.
- (3) Barr JK, Giannotti TE, Van Hoof TJ, Mongoven J, Curry M. Understanding barriers to participation in mammography by women with disabilities. *Am J Health Promot*. 2008; 22:381-5.
- (4) Roetzheim RG, Chirikos TN. Breast cancer detection and outcomes in a disability beneficiary population. *J Health Care Poor Underserved*. 2002; 13:461-76.

RESOURCES

American Association on Health & Disability www.aahd.us

American Association on Health & Disability's Susan G. Komen for the Cure® Grant www.aahd.us/page.php?pname=health/initiatives/sqkomen2009-10

Breast Health Access for Women with Disabilities (BHAWD) www.bhawd.org

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) Right to Know Campaign www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/women/righttoknow/default.htm

Center for Research on Women with Disabilities www.bcm.edu/crowd

The National Women's Health Information Center www.womenshealth.gov

North Carolina Office on Disability and Health/Chapel Hill, NC www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncodh

Susan G. Komen for the Cure® www.komen.org

For more information, please contact Komen Project Coordinator at 301-545-6140 x203 or visit our website at www.aahd.us



This publication was made possible by a grant from Susan G. Komen for the Cure®

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