

HHS NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, May 1, 1995

Contact: HCFA Press Office
(202) 690-6145

OLDER WOMEN URGED TO GET LIFE-SAVING TESTS FOR BREAST CANCER: CAMPAIGN STRESSES MEDICARE COVERAGE

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton today joined HHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala in launching a national campaign to urge older women to obtain mammography examinations for early detection of breast cancer.

The initial phase of the campaign will include a TV public service announcement featuring President Clinton, who lost his mother Virginia Kelly to breast cancer, and a second announcement featuring the First Lady. The campaign opens this month with an appeal for "Mama"grams -- messages for Mother's Day encouraging women to get mammography screening.

"The 46,000 breast cancer deaths in 1994 become even more tragic when we realize that some 30 percent of them could have been prevented by early detection and treatment of the disease," Secretary Shalala said. "Modern medical treatment of breast cancer has a high rate of success when the condition is found in its early stages. A mammogram can save your life."

In particular, the campaign is meant to promote use of Medicare coverage for mammography. Currently, only about 37 percent of women covered by Medicare are taking advantage of the benefit.

"Medicare now helps cover the cost of mammogram screening. A major goal of this campaign is to ensure that every woman who is covered by Medicare knows about this benefit and how to use it," Secretary Shalala said.

In the President's public service announcement, which includes Clinton family photos, he discusses his mother's battle with breast cancer. In the First Lady's spot, Ms. Clinton highlights success stories, including survivors of breast cancer. The "Mama"gram phase of the campaign will include pre-printed messages for greeting cards and special cards to be included in flowers delivered for Mother's Day.

The year-long campaign will continue to focus on increasing awareness about mammography for older women. These efforts will center on scheduled senior events, including the senior Olympics later this month.

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The National Cancer Institute estimates that approximately one of every eight American women will be afflicted with breast cancer during their lifetimes, and the risk increases with age. In 1994, approximately half of all new cases of breast cancer were in women age 65 and over. More than half of the deaths from breast cancer in that year were among women 65 and over.

"All Americans should be concerned that older women in their families receive periodic screenings for breast cancer," Secretary Shalala said. "We're encouraging physicians and other health care professionals to put forth special efforts to encourage the use of mammography screenings."

Bruce C. Vladeck, administrator of the Health Care Financing Administration, emphasized that the Medicare program for the elderly and disabled has helped to pay for mammography screenings since Jan. 1, 1991. Previously, Medicare covered mammography only when used to diagnose breast disease.

Vladeck said that publicity about the Medicare mammography benefit is also a high-priority project of the HCFA's Consumer Information Strategy.

"We must do much more than just pay for the care of sick and injured people," said Vladeck. "We believe we should be providing our beneficiaries with information that will help them make sound decisions on health care and how to lead healthier lives."

Medicare coverage of screening mammography was authorized by Congress in the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990. Congress in 1989 authorized Medicare coverage of screening Pap smear tests for early detection of cervical cancer. Medicare also covers immunizations for older Americans, including pneumococcal pneumonia, hepatitis-B and flu.

The coverage of these preventive health care services represented an historic change in the Medicare program, which previously had covered only services necessary for the diagnosis and treatment of illness or injury.

In the 1995 fiscal year, approximately five million Medicare beneficiaries will receive mammography screenings at a cost to the program of \$260 million.

Medicare helps pay for mammography screenings every two years for women age 65 and over. The required intervals between screenings vary for disabled Medicare beneficiaries younger than 65.

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Updated 10/93

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Update 10/93



Just - we should do. K

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

*Maria Chequer
Health Producer
202-845-5568*

Office of the Executive Vice President
Department of External Affairs

Thursday, February 23, 1995

*Zorn Brown -
Breast Cancer
African Amer. women
Breast Cancer Resource Center
202-463-8040, US Bureau*

Karen Finney
Deputy Press Secretary
First Lady's Press Office
Old Executive Office Building
Room 100
Washington, D.C., 20500

Dear Karen:

As per our conversation today (2/23) I am forwarding you the information relative to our "Buddy Check 9" prevention/education program. As you know one in **eight** women will develop breast cancer during her lifetime. It's a fact that if breast cancer is detected in its early stages, cure is possible. The "Buddy Check 9" program educates women to consider a change in lifestyle thus making self-examination a regular habit for women everywhere.

The program began here in October 1993 and is sponsored by *Lombardi Cancer Center at Georgetown University Medical Center*, the *Cancer Research Foundation of America (CRFA)*, and *W*USA-TV 9*. The goal is to encourage women to perform breast self-examinations on a monthly basis and to choose a buddy they care about...mother, daughter, sister, friend, or co-worker, and make sure they too will perform their breast self-exam.

On the ninth of each month Andrea Roane, anchor/reporter for W*USA-TV 9, produces a compelling story of an area woman or group of women who are [living] examples of the importance of performing breast self-examinations. At the end of each story our Cancer HelpLink telephone number - 202/784-4000 - is provided to encourage viewers to call to receive two "Buddy Check 9" kits - one for them and one for their partner - free of charge (see enclosure). The response has been tremendous. Each month we receive hundreds of calls requesting our "Buddy Check 9" kits and other information relative to breast health and cancer in general.

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Buddy Check 9
2/23/94

We would like to request the assistance of the First Lady for an interview with Channel 9's Andrea Roane for a "Buddy Check 9" segment on the importance of breast self-examinations as a means of early detection and a prevention for Washington area women - particularly African American women. As you know Washington leads the nation in cancer mortality, and we believe an interview with Mrs. Clinton would go a long way in encouraging women around the Washington area to perform self-examinations for themselves, loved ones and friends.

I would greatly appreciate your consideration regarding this important issue. Please let me know if you need any further information or details.

Sincerely,



Reggie Sanders
Associate Director
Public Relations
202/687-0838 office direct
Pager: 301/206-4675

703-7209277

HHS NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(d r a f t)

Contact: HCFA Press Office
(202) 690-6145

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HHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala today joined First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton in launching a national campaign to urge older women to obtain mammography examinations for early detection of breast cancer.

The campaign will include a TV public service announcement featuring President Clinton, whose mother died of breast cancer, and a second announcement featuring the First Lady. The campaign opens this month with an appeal for "Mama"-grams -- messages on Mothers Day encouraging women to get mammography screening.

"The 46,000 breast cancer deaths in 1994 become even more tragic when we realize that most of them could have been prevented by early detection and treatment of the disease," Ms. Clinton said. "Modern medicine treats breast cancer with a high rate of success when the condition is found in its early stages. A mammogram can save your life."

In particular, the campaign is meant to promote use of Medicare coverage for mammography. At present, only about 37 percent of women covered by Medicare are taking advantage of the benefit.

"Medicare now helps cover the cost of semi-annual mammogram screening. A major goal of this campaign is to be sure that every woman who is covered by Medicare knows about this benefit and how to use it," Secretary Shalala said.

In the President's public service announcement, which includes Clinton family photos, he discusses the loss of his mother, Virginia, to breast cancer. In the First Lady's spot, Ms. Clinton highlights success stories, including survivors of breast cancer. The "Mama"-gram campaign will include pre-printed messages for greeting cards and special cards to be included in flowers delivered for Mothers Day.

The National Cancer Institute estimates that approximately one of every eight American women will be afflicted with breast cancer during their lifetimes, and the risk increases with age. In 1994, approximately half of all new cases of breast cancer were in women age 65 and over. More than half of the deaths from breast cancer in that year were among women 65 and over.

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"All Americans should be concerned that older women in their families receive periodic screenings for breast cancer," Secretary Shalala said. "We're encouraging physicians and other health care professionals to put forth special efforts to encourage the use of mammography screenings."

Bruce C. Vladeck, administrator of the Health Care Financing Administration, emphasized that the Medicare program for the elderly and disabled has helped to pay for mammography screenings since Jan. 1, 1991. Previously, Medicare covered mammography only when used to diagnose breast disease.

Vladeck said that publicity about the Medicare mammography benefit is also a high-priority project of the HCFA's Consumer Information Strategy.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MAY 1, 1995

CONTACT: LISA CAPUTO
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202-456-2960

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON TO KICK-OFF ADMINISTRATION'S
MEDICARE MAMMOGRAPHY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

WASHINGTON, DC -- First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton will officially kick-off the Clinton Administration's Medicare Mammography Awareness Campaign on Monday, May 1, 1995. The campaign will feature public service announcements by the President and Mrs. Clinton and a special "Mama-gram" campaign in honor of Mother's Day.

The "Mama-gram" campaign will include pre-printed messages for greeting cards that will be available in card stores nationwide and special cards to be included in Mother's Day bouquets. The aim of the campaign is to encourage older women to utilize the Medicare benefit that provides for regular mammograms and to increase awareness about the importance of regular screenings for all women.

One out of eight women in this country will contract breast cancer at some point during her lifetime. Older women are at a higher risk because the incidents of breast cancer increase with age. Medicare covers mammograms, but the data shows that, over a two year period, fewer than 40 percent of women aged 65 and older take advantage of this Medicare benefit.

Since January, Mrs. Clinton has conducted listening sessions with senior women and doctors at hospitals and senior centers around the country in an effort to encourage older American women to utilize the Medicare mammography benefit. During the previous two years, many older women across the country conveyed their concerns about breast cancer to the First Lady. Mrs. Clinton explored the issue with officials at the Department of Health and Human Services and learned that too few older women were taking advantage of the Medicare mammography benefit.

"The stories I have been told by women have taught me a lot about how this issue of breast cancer is being perceived," Mrs. Clinton said. "As much work as we have done on it in our country, there are still large parts of our population who don't think it applies to them, who believe that early detection won't do any good for them, or who have fears that have to be addressed as we attempt to try to make all of our women healthier. I hope every American will encourage the women in their lives to get regular mammograms."

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 26, 1995

CONTACT: LISA CAPUTO
NEEL LATTIMORE
KAREN FINNEY
202-456-2960

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON TO KICK-OFF ADMINISTRATION'S
MEDICARE MAMMOGRAPHY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

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This year Mrs. Clinton conducted listening sessions with senior women and doctors at hospitals and senior centers around the country in an effort to encourage older American women to utilize the Medicare mammography benefit. During the previous two years, many older women across the country have conveyed their concerns about breast cancer to the First Lady. To answer their concerns, Mrs. Clinton explored the issue with officials at the Department of Health and Human Services and learned that too few older women were taking advantage of the Medicare mammography benefit.

"The stories I have been told by women have taught me a lot about how this issue of breast cancer is being perceived," Mrs. Clinton said. "As much work as we have done on it in our country, there are still large parts of our population who don't think it applies to them, who believe that early detection won't do any good for them, or who have fears that have to be addressed as we attempt to try to make all of our women healthier. I hope every American will encourage the women in their lives to get regular mammograms."

The kickoff event will take place at 11:30 AM in the East Room of the White House on Monday, May 1, 1995. The event is open to press coverage. Reporters who are not White House press pass holders who wish to cover the event must fax the names, dates of birth and social security numbers of those members who will attend the event to the attention of Karen Finney or Neel Lattimore at 202-456-7805 NO LATER THAN 5:00PM ON FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 1995.

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