



NEWS RELEASE

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BURSTEIN CALLS FOR INCREASED AWARENESS ON MAMMOGRAMS

National Survey Shows Insurance Status Leads to Disparities Among Women Receiving Procedure

ERIE COUNTY, NY— Today, Erie County Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein called attention to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) report demonstrating that the percentage of 50—64 year old U.S. women who received a mammogram in the past two years varied significantly by health insurance status. According to the National Health Interview Survey, 80% of women with private insurance, 67% of publicly insured women, and 39% of uninsured women aged 50-64 years in 2010 reported having a mammogram within the past two years.

“All women, regardless of their insurance status, should have regular mammograms when they reach 50 years of age, and should continue to do so on a regular basis for the rest of their lives,” **said Burstein**. “Insurance status should never dictate the evidence-based, primary prevention procedures an individual receives, and insurance status also does not mean that some people are more entitled to these potentially life-saving procedures than others. The Erie County Cancer Services program is available to help all women, regardless of their insurance status, get access to breast cancer screenings and treatments that can help save lives. There is no reason not to be screened for breast cancer. Women that have mammograms as recommended on a regular basis can identify a potential problem at an earlier stage when treatment is most effective and a cure is possible.”

In 2012, the Erie County Cancer Services Program provided mammograms for 545 uninsured or underinsured women under the age of 50 years and 869 uninsured or underinsured women aged 50 years and older. Uninsured populations are the least likely to maintain a regular cancer screening schedule and thus have poorer outcomes in general. Public insurance includes Medicaid, Medicare, Children’s Health Insurance Program, military and other public assistance and government programs.

For more information on eligibility and enrollment in the Erie County Cancer Services Program, call (716) 858-7376.

For more information:

On the Erie County Health Department, visit <http://www2.erie.gov/health/>

On the National Health Interview Survey, visit

http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6232a5.htm?s_cid=mm6232a5_e