Breast Cancer Awareness

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Supports Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

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We are currently accepting corporate sponsors and promotional partners for the 2016 Race for the Cure. Please contact us for more information.

Susan G. Komen Los Angeles County provides funding for breast health services, breast cancer education and outreach in our Los Angeles County communities. Through events like the Los Angeles County Race for the Cure®, Komen LA County invests 75 percent of the funds raised to support vital local breast health services, and dedicates the remaining 25 percent to national research to find the cures. Susan G. Komen Los Angeles County is the only organization in LA County that is exclusively dedicated to combating breast cancer on every front. We have one clear mission: saving lives and ending breast cancer forever.

We are serving the breast health needs of Los Angelenos through:
- No-cost breast cancer diagnostic services for uninsured and under-insured individuals
- Comprehensive breast cancer patient navigation, to help women find a medical home
- Breast cancer patient, survivor, and co-survivor support programs
- Public awareness and education about breast cancer issues
- Research to discover and deliver the cures

Invest in the health of your community and keep Susan G. Komen LA County strong.

Komenlacounty.org | 310-575-3011 | info@komenlacounty.org
The Sheila R. Veloz Breast Center Breast Cancer Survivor annual luncheon was held at Wolf Creek Restaurant. Andrea Standley, the 2015 testimonial speaker, shared her breast cancer experience with other survivors during the event. To read her story, go to henrymayogiving.com.
U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Releases Draft Screening Recommendations

Earlier this year, the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) posted for public comment a draft recommendation statement for breast cancer screening. The panel said the decision to start screening mammography in women prior to age 50 years should be an individual one. The Task Force recommends that women ages 50 to 74 receive screening mammography every two years. For women 75 and older, the panel says current science is inadequate to recommend for or against screening.

Below are comments from Richard C. Wender, M.D., chief cancer control officer of the American Cancer Society in response to the news.

“The United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) evaluated the evidence that has emerged since its last update (2009) and has reconfirmed its conclusion that mammography reduces breast cancer deaths for women 40 and older. The panel recommends that all women ages 50 to 74 be screened every 2 years, giving this recommendation a ‘B’ rating. The panel concluded that the benefits of screening women in their 40s are greater than the harms but that the difference is small. For this reason, the panel gave screening women in their 40s a ‘C’ rating.

“A ‘C’ rating is not a recommendation against mammography. In 2012, the USPSTF changed the definition of a ‘C’ rating to clarify that it means a woman should make an individualized decision with her doctor about whether to start mammography in her 40s based on her values, preferences, and health history. Nonetheless, coverage for screenings that receive a ‘C’ rating from USPSTF is not mandated under the Affordable Care Act.

“While empowering women to make an informed decision about screening is laudable and something that the American Cancer Society also recommends, we are concerned that the ‘C’ rating might lead to coverage for fewer women and more out of pocket costs for women in their 40s. Costs should not be a deterrent to women who otherwise would seek to have a mammogram.

“It’s important to remember that there are draft guidelines being posted for public comment. The American Cancer Society, working with its advocacy affiliate, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), strongly supports coverage of breast cancer screening for women in their 40s, and will work to ensure that coverage remains available for screening when a woman and her doctor decide it is in her best interest.”

Study Links Cigarette Smoking, Breast Cancer Risk

Increased Risk Seen in Women Who Start Smoking Before Having First Child

Results from an American Cancer Society study conducted last year support the hypothesis that smoking is associated with increased breast cancer risk for women who initiate smoking before first birth. The study, which appears online in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute, suggests that smoking might play a role in initiating breast cancer.

The relationship between active cigarette smoking and breast cancer risk remains controversial. Despite about 130 epidemiologic studies and seven consensus reports examining the relationship, there is still no scientific consensus, due in part to the fact that any association could be confounded by alcohol consumption, and also to the fact that studies have not consistently shown an increase in risk with duration or intensity of smoking, what scientists call a dose response.

To investigate the issues further, researchers led by Mia Gaudet, PhD, American Cancer Society director of genetic epidemiology, analyzed data from 73,388 women in the American Cancer Society’s Cancer Prevention Study II (CPS-II) Nutrition Cohort. During more than 13 years of follow-up, there were 3721 invasive breast cancer cases identified. They found incidence of invasive breast cancer was 24 percent higher in current smokers and 13 percent higher in former smokers compared to never smokers.

Women who started smoking before their first menstrual cycle were at 34 percent higher risk, while those started smoking after their first cycle but 11 or more years before having a child were at 45 percent higher risk. While alcohol consumption did not affect these associations significantly, the elevated risk was limited to current or former alcohol drinkers, and was not seen in those who never drank.

“The most consistent evidence we found to support a causal relationship between cigarette smoking and breast cancer risk was the link identified for women who start smoking before having their first child,” said Dr. Gaudet. “The relationship with early life smoking that we and others have found, together with the lack of a consistent relationship between breast cancer risk and smoking later in life, suggests that active cigarette smoking may play a greater role in the initiation than the progression of breast cancer.”

Information provided by the American Cancer Society. Learn more at cancer.org.
A very special service, at a very special price.
For the month of October, 3D mammograms are offered at a special cash price of $225*. Digital 2D mammograms are also available. Call our center today for more information or to make an appointment.

*Includes interpretation. Most insurers will cover an annual screening mammogram. Call us to learn more.

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Delivering Better Care with Cloud and Connect Technology

By BRADLEY SCHMIDT

When people think of innovation, integration, and efficiency, Inglewood, Calif., is probably the last city that comes to mind. Yet, as the founder and CEO of Inglewood Imaging Center, LLC, I’ve seen us evolve into the region’s top performing outpatient radiology center by embracing change, putting the physician and patient first, and delivering top-notch technology to one of the poorest and most costly regions in the United States.

Our region of central Los Angeles has never been a top choice for imaging centers looking to set up a new location. We had a vision to bring compassion, technology, and innovation to an amazing population of underserved patients and referring physicians. Serving this community of 2.5 million with cutting-edge technology helped us address a need of hundreds of local providers, clinics, and medical groups. With radiologists on-site, we now provide final reports the same day without having to send for services off-site. Straightforward as they are, our commitments to quality and speed have brought us a great reputation among local doctors.

We were aware of the challenges of serving this traditionally neglected community, however. Physical location is a big consideration for all imaging centers, where patients need to come in person to receive services. Imaging centers often set up shop in more affluent and connected areas to address this, but our area of Central Los Angeles County is still widely fragmented. Our goal was to be the glue for advanced care by becoming the region’s radiology center of excellence. The region’s challenges couldn’t be overcome completely, but we could start to address them with cloud-based tools that put the information directly in providers’ and patients’ hands.

We began by taking a portable approach to radiology images and reports. With the help of cloud-based PACS vendor Infinitt, we streamlined our image transmissions by generally eliminating printed film and streaming it directly to our computers without the need for printed images or downloaded PACS viewers. An estimated $30 billion is spent nationwide on duplicate exams and tests each year, and cloud-based results help cut down on these unnecessary costs while bringing more reliable patient care.

Once we had these results, we needed a reliable way to deliver them to providers and patients, especially with upcoming Meaningful Use Stage 2 requirements. Meaningful Use has big implications for imaging centers, with requirements that physicians must receive at least 10% of their imaging test results through a certified electronic health record (EHR) technology. This effectively means that imaging centers need to find a way of connecting to their clients online, or potentially find their clients going elsewhere to avoid penalties.

Practice Fusion, a free, web-based EHR, presented a rapid, comprehensive solution allowing us to drop completed results into the physician’s EHR inbox instantly. With the unique API-based connection, it took less than a month to offer our services to all providers on their platform, helping us to both connect our existing clients and gain visibility among other providers on the Practice Fusion platform, thousands of whom will be searching for connected imaging centers to fulfill incentive requirements at the start of 2014.

A big goal of ours is to not only make the workflow easier for the doctor, but also better engage patients. Since Practice Fusion has a connected patient portal, patients are able to log in online to see the results of all their tests. This helped us address some of the difficulties of transportation in our LA County area by allowing patients to receive and review results without visiting a physical location.

Over the last couple of years, we have been fortunate to personally visit over a thousand medical offices and talk to doctors directly about the evolution of care and our services as a pioneering virtual radiology leader. In spite of all the challenges of our location, innovative solutions have allowed us to not only survive but also thrive as a business, all while remaining committed to providing the best services available to a community that needs it.

Bradley Schmidt is the founder and CEO of Inglewood Imaging Center.
Office hours to fit the hectic life of the entertainment industry

UCLA and MPTF working together means you can see UCLA doctors at the times that work best for you. We understand that the entertainment industry doesn’t just work 9 to 5, Monday through Friday – and neither do we.

Our extended hours, seven-day schedules and our Health Wheels mobile office make it easy to keep your health in check and keep working. That’s care the entertainment industry can count on. And care that begins with U.

We’re here when U need us
Studies indicate that Latina women have lower rates of breast cancer and breast cancer death compared to non-Hispanic African American and non-Hispanic white women. But Latina women tend to be diagnosed with more advanced breast cancers, and breast cancer is still the most common cancer (and the leading cause of cancer death) among Latina women.

Getting Mammograms is Key in the Fight Against Breast Cancer

As a primary care facility, when it comes to Breast Cancer, Valley Community Healthcare focuses on raising awareness of the importance of women’s health exams, mammograms and early detection. 

The majority of VCH’s patients were completely uninsured prior to the 2014 implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Such patients are often unused to seeking preventative care and screenings and may be unaware that such screenings are available to them. Our providers and staff take the time to educate our newly insured patients as to the services that are now covered under their plans. Cancer screenings, like mammograms, are one of those benefits, and we provide these vital screenings at our health center sites. VCH also provides mammograms to those who remain uninsured, still almost 40% of our patients.

With a thriving Women’s Health practice and a Latina population that continues to grow (currently 76% of VCH patients are Latino), it was vital that we understood how breast cancer impacts this community. Interestingly, studies indicate that Latina women have lower rates of breast cancer and breast cancer death compared to non-Hispanic African American and non-Hispanic white women. But Latina women tend to be diagnosed with more advanced breast cancers, and breast cancer is still the most common cancer (and the leading cause of cancer death) among Latina women.

In this past year, with support from L.A. Care Health Plan, Valley Community Healthcare has stepped up its breast cancer awareness education. Special posters encouraging all our female patients to make an appointment for a free mammogram were placed in our 7 waiting rooms. Medical Assistants with the power to make such appointments reached via telephone to all female patients over age 45 to explain, encourage and hopefully set an appointment.

Of course, many of VCH’s patients have received mammograms here in the past. These patients were sent reminder notices as their next mammogram came due and also received follow-up calls to make appointments. This concentrated effort to educate and encourage our patients to take advantage of this vital cancer screening has netted excellent results. 810 appointments were made in the past 6 months, and 80% of those appointments were kept and screenings were completed. The information that Latinas are more likely to be diagnosed with advanced cancers may mean that they are less likely to get prompt follow-up after a problematic mammogram. It is incumbent upon VCH’s providers and referral technicians to ensure that our patients in need receive all additional levels of care they require. If our patient is covered by Medi-Cal or Covered California, the referral system is easier to manage. There are specialists within these plans that provide higher levels of screening and actual medical care for those who are diagnosed with cancer. If the patient is uninsured, she can still access needed care through the Los Angeles County health system. This is a more difficult system to navigate, and VCH performs as many diagnostics as possible to ‘arm’ ourselves with supportive information that will mitigate the time between the patient referral and the first patient visit at County. And we don’t just refer our patients; regardless of their insurance status, each patient is followed carefully through the referral process and VCH clinicians remain in communication with the specialists and testing labs throughout the patient’s treatment. These are our patients, we take that very seriously. Regardless of additional doctors or hospitalization needed, VCH clinicals remain our patient’s primary care physician in every sense of the word. In cancer, as in life, the connection between a patient and her doctor is a critical factor in achieving and maintaining good health.

Information for this article was provided by Valley Community Healthcare. Learn more by visiting www.valleycommunityhealthcare.org.
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Start training for one of our upcoming events:
2/7/16 Los Cabos Half Marathon - Cabo San Lucas, Mexico
2/14/16 LA Marathon - Run Dodger Stadium to the Pacific Ocean in Santa Monica
4/10/16 Lavaman Olympic Triathlon - Kona, Hawaii

Interested in running trails? Visit our website to learn more about the Trail Ultra Team