

SCREENS for Cancer Act

Fact Sheet – May 2023

The National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP), a partnership between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state departments of health, provides lifesaving breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services to women who are low-income, uninsured or underinsured who do not qualify for Medicaid. NBCCEDP has a proven record of success and provides public education, outreach, patient navigation and care coordination to increase breast and cervical cancer screening rates and reach underserved populations. The Screening for Communities to Receive Early and Equitable Needed Services (SCREENS) for Cancer Act would reauthorize NBCCEDP through 2028.

IMPORTANCE OF SCREENING AND EARLY DETECTION

- An estimated 300,590 people in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer and nearly 44,000 will die from the disease in 2023 alone.
- At the beginning of the pandemic, breast cancer screenings declined by over 80 percent and the National Cancer Institute (NCI) estimates that pandemic-related disruptions or delays in care and screening are expected to result in an excess of 2,500 breast cancer deaths by 2030. More recent studies show that the decline in screening rates have persisted, still not returning to pre-pandemic levels.
- CDC highlighted a decline in cancer screening among people from racial and ethnic minority groups with lower incomes when their access to medical services decreased at the beginning of the pandemic. NBCCEDP supports interventions which help address racial inequities in breast cancer screening and diagnosis, emphasizing outreach to those who are geographically or culturally isolated.
- Without access to early detection programs, many people must delay or forgo screenings, which could lead to late-stage breast cancer diagnoses. This delay can mean that a person may not seek care until the cancer has spread beyond the breast, making it harder and up to five times more expensive to treat.

ABOUT THE SCREENS FOR CANCER ACT

- Since 1991, NBCCEDP has served more than 6.1 million women, detecting nearly 77,000 breast cancers and over 24,000 premalignant breast lesions. Last reauthorized in 2007, NBCCEDP has a legacy of reaching underserved populations and providing high-quality care, giving people across the country access to needed breast health services.
- Many people still face substantial barriers to screening like geographic isolation, limited health literacy or self-efficacy, lack of provider recommendation, inconvenient times to access services and language barriers.
- This reauthorization would provide greater flexibility to NBCCEDP grantees, allowing them to further implement innovative evidence-based interventions and aggressive outreach to underserved communities through media, peer educators and patient navigators.
- At current funding levels, NBCCEDP serves fewer than 15 percent of the estimated number of eligible women for breast cancer services. SCREENS includes an increased funding authorization for NBCCEDP to enable Congress to support this vital safety net program.

Susan G. Komen is calling on members of Congress to preserve access to critical breast and cervical cancer safety-net services by cosponsoring the Screening for Communities to Receive Early and Equitable Needed Services (SCREENS) for Cancer Act.