

Allegany County Health Department

“Promoting Health and Preventing Disease”

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT KICKS OFF WOMEN’S HEALTH WEEK WITH ANNOUNCEMENT OF KOMEN GRANT AWARD Funding Supports Breast Cancer Screening for High-Risk Women Under Age 40

CUMBERLAND, MD – Sunday, May 9 (Mother’s Day) marks the start of National Women’s Health Week, a weeklong awareness campaign which stresses the importance of all aspects of women’s physical, emotional, and mental health. Again this year, thanks to a recent grant awarded to the Allegany County Health Department, eligible area women can be screened to prevent one particular health concern – breast cancer. Maryland is ranked fifth in the nation for breast cancer-related deaths.

On April 15, the Maryland Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure proudly announced Allegany County Health Department as one of its grant recipients for fiscal year 2010 at an award event held at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum. Komen Maryland Funds support a variety of innovative programs that offer a comprehensive range of breast health services, ranging from screening and treatment to support services across the state of Maryland.

This is the fifth consecutive year that the ACHD has received a Komen grant award for its breast cancer screening program, which specifically targets women under the age of 40 who have a family history of breast cancer (a mother, sister, or daughter with a history of breast cancer) or who are exhibiting symptoms (a lump in the breast, sudden or abnormal breast discharge, etc.). The Health Department also offers a similar program for women over 40 years of age.

In order to qualify for the screening programs, clients must be Maryland residents meeting the program income guidelines who are either uninsured or whose insurance does not cover breast cancer screenings.

“The Allegany County Health Department partners with local health care providers and radiology facilities in the Allegany and Garrett County region to bring free breast cancer screening services to women who qualify for the program. We have joined in the mission of Susan G. Komen for the Cure, which is to *end breast cancer forever*” said Paula McKenzie, RN, Director of Cancer Prevention Programs.

The money to fund the Komen grant program is made possible through contributions to Komen Maryland and through proceeds from events such as the annual Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure that takes place each October in Hunt Valley. Komen Maryland has invested \$25 million in community breast cancer programs and to national research since 1993. Seventy-five percent (75%) of net proceeds generated by the Maryland Affiliate stays in Maryland. The remaining twenty-five percent (25%) funds national breast cancer research, often occurring at Maryland institutions.

For more information about the Allegany County Health Department’s breast cancer screening program or to determine eligibility, call 301-759-5083 or go online to www.alleganyhealthdept.com. More information about breast cancer and the importance of preventive screening is available at www.komenmd.org.

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