

The Health Department Wears Pink for Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is here, also known as breast cancer awareness month. This is the month where people paint the world pink and support the fighters, survivors, and honor those who were taken. The Anson County Health Department wears pink in support of breast cancer awareness month.

While supporting friends and loved ones, it is also important to offer valuable facts on the disease, and share useful information on lowering the risk of breast cancer. Breast cancer risk increases with age and women with inherited genetics are at high risk of breast cancer.

Breast cancer is the 2nd leading cause of death among women in the United States. African American women under the age of 35 have a breast cancer rate two times higher than White women the exact age. In 2016, Anson County's breast cancer diagnosis was 187% higher than the state rate, only 2% lower than the county with the worst rate. Statistics reveal that each year it is estimated that over 40,000 women will die from breast cancer. If breast cancer is detected late, the cancer cells can develop aggressively, which can become fatal.

Breast cancer screenings are important factors in preventing and detecting breast cancer. Two popular breast cancer screenings are clinical examinations and mammograms. Clinical examinations are physically done by a healthcare provider. The provider carefully feels the patients' breast for any abnormalities or changes. Mammograms are x-ray screenings used to detect lumps or other signs of breast cancer. It is recommended that women undergo regular screenings. The American College of Gynecology recommends that all women have a baseline mammogram at the age of 40. Mammograms are recommended annually for women 45-54 years of age and every other year for women 55-74.

Self-breast exams help women become familiar with the way their breasts normally look and feel. Self-Breast exams allow women to examine their own breast tissue to notice any visual or physical changes to lower the risk of breast cancer. For other methods to lower the risk of breast cancer, follow these approaches:

- Limit alcohol • Don't smoke • Eat healthy • Control weight gain • Be physically active • Breast-feed • Limit dose and duration of hormone therapy • Avoid exposure to radiation and environmental pollution.

Genetic mutation is a vital risk factor for breast cancer. It is important that women learn their family history of breast cancer, and to get an understanding of genetic counseling and testing. Genetic counseling is one of the key factors to help reduce the threat of breast cancer because it determines the overall risk. This particular method helps women learn about inherited gene mutation. Gene mutation is done with a blood or saliva sample at a medical facility. Other risk factors that may increase the chances in getting breast cancer include:

- Gender • Menstrual periods • Not having children or having them later in life • Being overweight

The Anson County Health Department provides women wellness visits to ensure women have access to mammogram screenings and appointments. Jennifer Dockery, the health department's nurse practitioner, encourages all women 20 years and older to conduct self-breast exams. Mrs. Dockery also advises women to be seen annually by their provider for clinical breast exams.

Atrium Health Anson offers mammography screening. Free mammography screening is provided to women who are local and do not have health insurance. Based on results, patients will be referred to The Charlotte Radiology Breast Center in Monroe for a full diagnostic mammography if needed.

The Anson County Health Department is located at 110 Ashe Street in Wadesboro. Atrium Health Anson is located at 2301 Highway 74 in Wadesboro. The Charlotte Radiology Breast Center in Monroe, is located at 1550 Faulk Street in Monroe, on the campus of Atrium Health Union. Contact (704) 292-2272.

For more information about free mammography screenings and guidelines please call Atrium Health Anson at (704) 994-500.

For overall information contact Dinikia Savage at the Anson County Health Department at (704) 994-3342.

Governor Cooper Proclaims October Minority Enterprise Development Month

Proclamation serves to nurture and celebrate North Carolina's small, minority and women-owned businesses

In conjunction with Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week which kicked-off convenings to promote the awareness and development of minority and women-owned businesses in North Carolina, Governor Roy Cooper signed a proclamation declaring October 2018 as Minority Enterprise Development Month. The proclamation acknowledges the outstanding achievements of minority businesses, corporations and financial institutions that support minority businesses throughout the state.

"Supporting the development of a diverse business community ensures that we have the best and brightest talent tackling our state's biggest challenges – and with even greater outcomes," said Governor Cooper. "As economic engines, minority businesses generate thousands of jobs and contribute billions in sales each year, positively impacting our state's bottom line."

North Carolina is home to more than 183,000 businesses owned by minorities and women, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency. These businesses achieve more than \$16.1 billion in sales annually and employ more than 261,000 North Carolinians.

N.C. Department of Administration Secretary Machel Sanders addressed MED Week attendees in Greensboro, underscoring the importance of the diverse and inclusive business community in strengthening the state's economy. Sanders encouraged participation in the State's Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB) program, emphasizing current opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses to work with state government on Hurricane Florence disaster recovery efforts.

"Investing in the growth and development of small minority and women-owned businesses creates opportunities for individuals to improve their quality of life and the communities where they live," said Secretary Machel Sanders. "And as we move forward to help our eastern and southern counties most impacted by Hurricane Florence to rebuild and recover, there are even greater opportunities for you and your businesses to help."

Through the end of the year, cities across the state are hosting educational workshops and events that commemorate the achievements of minority entrepreneurs and affirm North Carolina's commitment to the principle of equal opportunity. Visit the HUB Office website for a list of events.



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