Don’t Deal Away Our Health!

THE PROGRAM:

Colorado’s Women’s Wellness Connection program (WWC) annually screens nearly 18,000 low-income, uninsured women for breast and cervical cancer through cooperative agreements with 46 federally qualified health centers, local health departments, hospitals, safety net clinics and non-profit organizations. Women diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer are provided with treatment through the Breast and Cervical Cancer Medicaid Program as part of state and federal legislation. CDC’s National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP) has implemented quality indicators or benchmarks that all programs should achieve. Colorado has achieved all 11 quality indicators for the past four years which allow 90% or more of Colorado women with an abnormal breast or cervical cancer screening to receive complete follow-up care, 75% or more of Colorado women to receive this complete care in 60 days or less, and 90% or more of Colorado women diagnosed with a breast or cervical cancer to enter treatment within 60 days of diagnosis. The WWC program implemented a bundled payment reimbursement system in 2010 which allowed the program to contain costs while improving the quality of care.

THE IMPACT:

Due to a 1.6 million dollar budget cut in the current fiscal year to the program’s State funds, the WWC program estimates that it will screen 5,100 fewer women. As a consequence of the reduction, a projected 85 women will not be diagnosed with or receive treatment for breast or cervical cancer. This will result in detecting cancers in a later, less treatable stage, emergency room overutilization, increased health care costs and lives lost.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

Investing in prevention is investing in a healthier America! Reducing or eliminating funding for prevention and health promotion programs will weaken the core public health infrastructure, the workforce, and our capacity to improve health in our communities.

Advocating for healthier people through health education on behalf of the 30,000 members of the Coalition of National Health Education Organizations:

American Public Health Association: Public Health Education & Health Promotion Section
American Public Health Association: School Health Education and Services Section
American School Health Association
American Association for Health Education
American College Health Association
Directors of Health Promotion & Education
Eta Sigma Gamma
Society for Public Health Education

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