



INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S
POLICY RESEARCH

News

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 24, 2001

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LIVING WITH OR DYING FROM BREAST CANCER A MATTER OF RACE Lower Incidents, But More Deaths for African American Women

Washington, DC Even as the death rate from breast cancer in younger white women has fallen 7 percent over the last two decades, it has risen by 26 percent in older African American women; this, despite lower incidents of the disease itself. In other words, even though less African American women have breast cancer, those who do, die.

For all races of women, mammography screening potentially reduces mortality by up to 30 percent. Prior cost-effectiveness analyses of breast cancer screening among general populations have demonstrated that reductions in mortality can be achieved at a reasonable cost per life year saved. Targeted culturally sensitive outreach and follow-up programs have been found to be effective, but often they are not implemented due to cost. To date, cost effectiveness analyses have focused on general populations and have omitted the programs that are vital to improved minority participation.

“We expect that the added costs of targeted cancer control programs for vulnerable African American women would be offset by the gains in quality-adjusted life-years saved as a result of early diagnosis and improved treatment,” says Marianne C. Fahs, Ph.D., M.P.H., of the Health Policy Research Center, of the Milano Graduate School’s Health Policy Research Center, New School University. “Our research shows that the average cost of targeted (culturally-sensitive) breast cancer outreach and follow-up programs is only \$4.68 per person,” adds Fahs.

Fahs will present economic results from a National Cancer Institute funded project addressing these gaps in her paper, “Culturally Sensitive Breast Cancer Control for African-American Women: Effectiveness, Costs, and Cost-Effectiveness.” It is one of more than 100 papers to be presented during 30 sessions at the Institute for Women’s Policy Research (IWPR) Sixth Women’s Policy Research Conference in Washington, D.C. This session, Health and Well-Being Among Women of Color, will be held June 8, at 3:30 P.M., at the Capitol Hilton Hotel.

Results from Fahs’ and others research will be used to design health services delivery to reduce breast cancer mortality among all women in the United States.

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The Conference is co-sponsored by The George Washington University, School of Public Policy, Women's Studies Program, and the Washington Office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation is a non-profit, private educational institution committed to the advancement of public policy issues in the spirit of the basic values of Social Democracy. It is Germany's oldest political foundation. Officials from Congress and the Administration, members of the European Parliament and the German Bundestag; top state office-holders, and leaders from business, labor, and academia are expected to attend and take part.

Information on IWPR's conference can be found at www.iwpr.org. Call Linda S. Silberg, Director of Communications, to arrange an interview with Dr. Fahs or any of our conference presenters.

The Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) is a public policy research organization dedicated to informing and stimulating the debate on public policy issues of critical importance to women and their families.

Other health-related panels:

Disability and Addiction Among Welfare Recipients

Friday, June 8, 11:45 AM

Protecting Women's Rights: Violence Against Women, Health Policy and the ERA

Friday, June 8, 1:30 PM

Gender and Aging Bias in the Health Care System

Saturday, June 9, 9:30 AM

Overlooked Necessities: Family Leave & Medical Leave in the 21st Century

Saturday, June 9, 9:30 AM

Around the World: An International Look at Women and Girls' Health and Well-Being

Saturday, June 9, 9:30 AM

From Mergers to Managed Care: Are Recent Trends in Health Care Reform Helping or Hurting Women?

Saturday, June 9, 11 AM

New Insights into Paid Work and Caregiving: Race, Class, Gender and Geography

Saturday, June 9, 11 AM

Money Matters: Implications of Welfare and Poverty on Women's Health

Saturday, June 9, 2:30 PM