

## **Chilton Memorial Comprehensive Breast Center Grand Opening**

February 16, 2011

### **Acknowledgments**

It is wonderful to be back at Chilton for such a celebratory event. Thank you to Deborah Zastocki, (President and CEO) for inviting me to be here.

### **Introduction**

By opening this new center, Chilton is changing the lives of women in our state. They will have a new opportunity to get preventive screenings that saves lives.

### **Breast Cancer**

Breast cancer, as we know, is one of the most common and potentially deadly forms of cancer. Breast cancer is second only to lung cancer as a leading cause of death from cancer for women.

- In the United States, every year there are 200,000 breast cancer cases & in NJ alone there are about 6,000 cases of breast cancer.
- Sadly, each year about 1,400 women die from breast cancer in NJ

We all know these are not just simply numbers--they are our mothers, sisters and friends.

What makes these figures even more tragic is that many breast cancer deaths could have been prevented through simple tests and screenings. Far too often, women are not diagnosed with breast cancer until it is too late. A disease that could have been controlled, if not cured becomes deadly and treatment options become very invasive and limited.

The good news is that the outlook for women with breast cancer has improved over the years and the mortality rate has declined steadily.

- In the United States, incidence of breast cancer has decreased by 2.0% per year from 1999 to 2006 among women
- In the United States, deaths from breast cancer have decreased by 1.9% per year from 1998 to 2006 among women.

### **Importance of Screenings**

Much of this decline can be attributed both to earlier detection through wider use of mammography screening and to improved treatments.

To date, no way to prevent breast cancer has been discovered and experience has shown that treatments are most effective when a cancer is detected early, while still small and contained and before it has spread to other tissues. Those two facts suggest that, at the present time, improving early detection and diagnosis is the most effective way to continue reducing the toll from breast cancer.

In 2001, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC) committee examined the array of promising detection and diagnostic technologies then in

various stages of development, and concluded that mammography, was still the best choice for screening the general population to detect breast cancer at early and treatable stages. (Their findings and recommendations were published in 2001 in *Mammography and Beyond: Developing Technologies for Early Detection of Breast Cancer.*)

We've also seen studies over the years that demonstrate the effectiveness of mammography.

One study released in September and published in the journal *Cancer*, looked at the effectiveness of screening mammograms for women in their 40s. Researchers compared death rates from breast cancer in women who got screened and those who didn't between 1986 and 2005. The death rate from breast cancer was 29% lower in the women who got mammograms compared to those who didn't.

On average, mammography will detect about 80-90% of the breast cancers in women without symptoms. Women are recognizing the benefits of mammography and the number of women who received these screenings increased 29% from 1987 to 2000.

New Jersey is above the national average for women 40-64 getting a recent mammogram with about 64% of women receiving a mammogram within the past year.

It is widely known that low-income women are less likely to get screened. So the Department has been working to increase the number of women receiving mammograms. The Department's NJCEED program provides comprehensive outreach and education in communities, as well as free screening services for breast, cervical, colorectal and prostate cancer for eligible individuals.

Since FY 1998, the NJCEED Program has performed 129,091 mammograms on uninsured and underinsured women, with 1,225 cases of 'in situ and invasive breast' cancer detected. This program has proved to be a great resource for low-income and uninsured women, who can get life-saving screening services and referrals for follow-up care

We know screenings are our most powerful tool in detecting breast cancer. But equally important is the treatment and services patients receive when they are diagnosed. For many women, the very topic of breast cancer provokes confusion and dread. With the plethora of studies and other information on breast cancer it can be difficult for someone diagnosed to navigate their options.

### **Chilton Comprehensive Breast Center**

That is why a comprehensive center, like Chilton's, is so important in helping patients. Facing breast cancer is a difficult battle, which requires many important decisions on the part of the patient. Chilton patients will have a great resource here at the breast center to walk them through those challenging decisions.

**Closing**

Today's grand opening of the Comprehensive Breast Center will allow even more women to get critical screenings, preventive tests, and education. As soon as a woman walks through these doors she will have the opportunity to live a longer and healthier life. As health professionals we have a great opportunity to help those battling diseases and we cannot underestimate the power of education and screenings to help one person's life. With the technology available at this center more women will get the treatment they need and beat breast cancer because of it.

Thank you to Chilton for your commitment to always enhancing the quality of care to your patients.

Congratulations on the opening of this incredible new health center.

Thank you.