



Affordable Care Act: Breast Cancer Screening

Each year, an estimated 192,000 women in America will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 40,000 will die from the disease, making it the second leading cause of cancer death in women. The 5-year relative survival rate is 98 percent when breast cancer is detected at an early stage but only 27 percent for late-stage disease. Cost is a significant barrier to getting preventive care.

Only 35 percent of women aged 40 and over who are uninsured or underinsured received a mammogram in the past year, compared with 60 percent of adequately insured women. For women with commercial health insurance or Medicare, even relatively small out-of-pocket costs can significantly reduce mammography rates, particularly for underserved populations.

Ensuring access to evidence-based cancer screenings and quality treatment is critical to the fight against breast cancer.

Highlights of Breast Cancer Screening in the Affordable Care Act

- Requires that all commercial health insurance plans provide first-dollar coverage for mammograms for women starting at age 40 (*Rollout for new plans begins 2010; most group and individual plans by 2014*)
- Eliminates out-of-pocket costs for preventive services such as mammograms under the Medicare program (*Effective beginning 2011*)
- Gives states a 1 percent increase in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) if they offer Medicaid beneficiaries preventive services recommended by the USPSTF, immunizations recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), and remove cost sharing for all these services (*Effective beginning 2013*)
- Creates a public health investment fund to expand and sustain national investment in prevention and public health programs, including health screenings (*Effective beginning 2010*)
- Establishes education campaigns for the public and health care professionals regarding young women's breast health (*Effective beginning 2010*)

Implications for the American Cancer Society and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)

- ACS CAN will continue to fight for funding for the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program, which provides a critical service to medically underserved women.
- ACS CAN will strongly advocate to protect and increase health coverage guarantees for breast cancer screening tests.
- ACS CAN will continue to work to ensure that all women have access to evidence-based prevention, early detection, treatment services that are critical to breast cancer patients.