

BOBBIE GREENE

11/3/97

Alice -
Chris
Jon Jennings
distributed these
@ last week's
women's meeting.
I thought it
might come in
handy for some
of you mail.
He's also preparing
a more general
piece on health
accomplishments
- - of "Pass

at along paper &
get it.

Thanks
Sabbie

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION INITIATIVES TO FIGHT BREAST CANCER

- **Introduced Legislation to Prevent Discrimination Based on Genetic Information.** The President has urged Congress to pass bipartisan legislation to prohibit health plans from inappropriately using genetic screening information to deny coverage, set premiums, or to distribute confidential information. For many diseases, such as breast cancer, we are beginning to identify hidden genetic disorders which can spur early treatment. However, genetic testing also can be used by insurance companies and others to discriminate and stigmatize groups of people. In fact, studies show that a reason women do not get genetic testing for breast cancer is because they fear the information will be used to discriminate against them.
- **Expanded Medicare to Pay for Annual Screening Mammograms for all Medicare Beneficiaries Age 40 and Over.** The balanced budget expands coverage to pay for annual screening mammograms for all Medicare beneficiaries age 40 and over, enabling women to follow the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) recommendations to undergo regular mammogram screening at age forty. President Clinton has also taken action to bring Medicaid and federal employee health benefits in line with NCI recommendations.
- **Made Medicare Mammograms More Affordable and Accessible.** The balanced budget enacted by the President this August waived deductibles for all screening mammograms, making annual mammograms more affordable for older women. Costs can be a significant barrier for older women to get mammograms. Although Medicare has covered screening mammography since 1991, only 14 percent of eligible beneficiaries without supplemental insurance receive mammograms.
- **Built on HHS Commitment to Breast Cancer Research, Prevention and Training.** Since the President took office, funding for breast cancer research, prevention and treatment has nearly doubled, from about \$276 million in FY 1993 to an estimated \$513 million in the President's FY 1997 budget.
- **Continued Department of Defense Funding for Breast Cancer Research.** In FY 1997, the DOD will spend \$112 million on breast cancer research. This is an unprecedented partnership between the military, scientists, physicians, and the community to fund grants to invigorate breast cancer research. One of the most important and innovative aspects of the program is that breast cancer survivors are actively engaged in defining the program and serve on scientific panels which review grant proposals.
- **Increased Funding for Genetic Research.** HHS-funded research led to the discovery of two breast cancer genes -- BRCA-1 and BRCA-2 -- which holds great promise for the development of new prevention strategies. On October 26, 1996, President Clinton announced \$30 million in new funding for research into the genetic basis of breast cancer.

- **Educated Older Women to Use the Medicare Mammography Screening Benefit.** The First Lady has launched a yearly mammography campaign to inform and encourage older women to use the Medicare mammography screening benefit. Despite evidence that early detection through mammography and clinical breast exams is essential, 45 percent of women over age 65 report they have not had a mammogram during the past two years. This year the First Lady's campaign focuses on encouraging women with particularly low mammography utilization rates to get mammograms.
- **Improved Mammography Quality Standards.** The final regulations the President announced today strengthen and improve the program the FDA implemented for mammography standards in 1994 to ensure that they meet standards for equipment, personnel, record-keeping, and quality control. Women and their families can look for the FDA certificate as evidence that the facility meets quality standards. These new standards will ensure women high quality, accurate mammograms. Women can find a certified mammography facility by calling 1-800-4-CANCER.
- **Supported Legislation That Prevents Women From Being Forced Out of the Hospital Only Hours After a Mastectomy.** In his State of the Union Address, President Clinton endorsed bipartisan legislation to ensure that women are not forced out of the hospital before they are ready because of pressure from their health plan. The Department of Health and Human Services also sent a letter to all Medicare managed care plans making it clear that they may not set ceilings for inpatient hospital treatment or set requirements for outpatient treatment, and that a woman and her doctor should make decisions about what is medically necessary.
- **Provided Screening for Low-Income Women.** CDC's National Breast Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program offers free or low-cost mammography screening to low-income elderly and minority women. On October 1, 1996, Secretary Shalala announced the expansion of the program to all fifty states. The goal is to reduce breast cancer deaths among these women by 30% and cervical cancer deaths by 90% through increased mammography and pap testing.
- **Applied Space Technology to Detect and Treat Breast Cancer.** NASA is applying cutting edge technology to improve ways to diagnose and treat breast cancer. For example, NASA uses the microgravity of space to grow human tissue for research and transplantation, gaining valuable knowledge important to the treatment of breast and ovarian cancer. Mars Pathfinder technology has been developed to enhance pictures is being modified to make three-dimensional models of breast tissue. This enables doctors to differentiate breast tissue more accurately without using painful invasive procedures.

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Jenn/Nicole -

Chris Jennings
Contributed this
@ last week's
women's meeting;

Jim passing it
along on the
chance you might
find it useful.

It's the same
sort of thing
you can provide
on the brain/
child care following
at this week's

meeting. I'm sorry
I can't be there,
But I'm going
to the Rush
Library that
day, ~~can't~~ Deputy
before dawn.

cheers,

