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Central Michigan District Health Department

*"Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities"*

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2012 E. Preston Avenue, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 48858, [www.cmdhd.org](http://www.cmdhd.org)

**To: Local Newspapers**

**From: Michele Wolfe, Health Educator**

**RE: Breast Cancer Awareness**

**Release Date: September/October 2009**

**BREAST CANCER SCREENING--SAVES LIVES**

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Since 1985, local coordinating agencies in Michigan have offered the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program that provides free mammogram screening for program eligible women. Over the same 30-year period, mammography rates have more than doubled for women age 50 and older. Breast cancer deaths have declined. This is exciting progress, but there are still women who do not get screening mammograms and clinical breast exams at regular intervals.

"Ninety-five percent of women that have breast cancer will be alive in 5 years, if it is discovered early," said Dr. Robert Graham, Medical Director of the Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD). "Women should get into the habit of doing a monthly self breast exam and seeing their doctor for a clinical breast exam every year," Graham added.

Women with low or no income are noted to have a mammogram less often than women with higher incomes. Often women do not seek out these screenings, because they do not have insurance or the money to pay for services. Fortunately, the Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) is able to offer free breast and cervical cancer screenings for women age 40 through 64 years who are uninsured or underinsured. The income eligibility guidelines are very generous. For example, a woman in a family of three is eligible for the program with an annual household income up to \$45,775.00. Free services available through the program include: an annual

clinical breast exam, mammogram, Pap test, and pelvic exam. Appointments are made throughout the year for this breast and cervical cancer screening program. Simply call your local branch of the Central Michigan District Health Department to confirm your eligibility and to make an appointment.

“If all women age 40 and older took advantage of early detection methods – mammography plus clinical breast exam – breast cancer death rates would drop much further,” says Dr. Robert Graham, Medical Director. “The key to mammography screening is that it needs to be done routinely – once is not enough.”

For more information about the BCCCP, visit the health department website at [www.cmdhd.org](http://www.cmdhd.org) or <http://www.michigancancer.org/bcccp>. Information adapted from the National Breast Cancer Awareness Month webpage. This article was provided to you by the staff at the Central Michigan District Health Department which serves residents in Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and Roscommon Counties.

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