

Congress Should Reauthorize the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP) is highly effective at detecting and treating breast and cervical cancer in low-income, uninsured, and underinsured women – who may otherwise not be screened.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) urges Congress to reauthorize this critical program by passing the Screening for Communities to Receive Early and Equitable Needed Services (SCREENS) for Cancer Act. The SCREENS for Cancer Act ([H.R. 3916](#) / [S. 1840](#)), introduced by Representatives Joe Morelle (D-NY) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Susan Collins (R-ME), reauthorizes the NBCCEDP program through 2028 and gives greater flexibility to NBCCEDP grantees, enabling them to implement innovative, evidence-based early detection and screening interventions and use media, peer educators, and patient navigators to actively promote the program to eligible individuals. The results of not screening in a timely and appropriate fashion can be higher costs and unnecessary suffering and death due to cancers found in later stages.

The National Breast & Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP)

For more than 30 years, the NBCCEDP has decreased disparities in breast and cervical cancer deaths. The program – through grants to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, 13 tribal organizations, 2 U.S. territories, and 5 U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands – provides breast and cervical cancer screenings, diagnostic tests, and treatment referral services to communities that are limited-income, underserved, under-insured, and uninsured in the U.S. Since 1991 the NBCCEDP has provided over 15.6 million screening exams to more than 6 million eligible people. People with incomes at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) are eligible for the NBCCEDP program at ages 21-64 for individuals with a cervix for cervical cancer screening and women ages 40-64 for breast cancer screening.ⁱ

Breast and Cervical Cancer in the U.S.

- In 2024, an estimated 310,720 womenⁱⁱ in the U.S. will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer, and 42,250 will die from the disease.ⁱⁱⁱ Additionally, an estimated 13,820 people will be diagnosed with invasive cervical cancer, and 4,360 will die from the disease.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Despite the fact that U.S. breast and cervical cancer death rates have been declining for several decades, **not all people have benefited equally from the advances** in prevention, early detection, and treatments that have helped achieve these lower rates. For example, research shows that those who are **uninsured and underinsured have lower breast and cervical cancer screening rates**, resulting in a greater risk of being diagnosed at a later, more advanced stage of disease.^{iv}

ACS CAN Supports the Reauthorization of this Lifesaving Program

ACS CAN supports the reauthorization of the NBCCEDP to provide the program greater flexibility in providing access to lifesaving screening, diagnostic, and treatment services and continue its innovative work aimed to reduce disparities and advance health equity in breast and cervical cancer.

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ⁱ Tangka, F., Kenny, K., Miller, J., & Howard, D. H. (2020). The eligibility and reach of the national breast and cervical cancer early detection program after implementation of the affordable care act. *Cancer causes & control : CCC*, 31(5), 473–489.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10552-020-01286-0>

ⁱⁱ Throughout this document *women* refers to individuals assigned female at birth. However, the NBCCEDP program also provides screening and treatment services to eligible transgender individuals.

ⁱⁱⁱ American Cancer Society. *Cancer Facts & Figures 2024*. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2024.

^{iv} American Cancer Society. *Cancer Prevention & Early Detection Facts & Figures 2021-2022*. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2021.