



Maine Breast Cancer Coalition News & Views

summer 2009

www.mainebreastcancer.org

1-800-928-2644

Key points of the NBCC

“Framework for a Health Care System Guaranteeing Access to Quality Health Care for All”:

Coverage and Benefits: A Federal-level board should determine the benefits package. The basic benefits package should be equivalent to the most comprehensive plan available to members of Congress through the Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan. The benefits package guarantees coverage for care that is based on scientific evidence and is continuously reviewed and updated based on available best practices. Coverage should provide access to care that is medically effective and cost efficient.

Patient Participation: There must be a significant number (the NBCC Framework calls for at least 25%) of educated patient/consumer members on all boards, committees and panels established to review and assess the best evidenced-based treatment options, their cost effectiveness, decide the level of benefits and determine effective methods for communicating health care information to consumers, providers and plans.

Quality: Health reform should integrate into our health care system a process by which tools and methods for measuring what is and what’s not working so quality of care can be improved continuously.

Continuity: Our health care system should be such that no one is ever without coverage, regardless of their employment status. The health care system should provide guaranteed access to coverage and should not discriminate or deny coverage for any reason, including pre-existing conditions.

Financing: The system will be financed in part through cost savings and shared responsibility.

MBCC Representatives Attend National Breast Cancer Coalition Advocacy Training Conference

This past May, representatives from the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition attended the National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC) Advocacy Training Conference in Washington, D. C.

Four MBCC representatives joined hundreds of participants from across the country and the world. For three intensive days of workshops and plenary sessions participants learned about latest information on breast cancer research, quality care, and issues around access to healthcare in preparation for meetings with members of Congress and their staff.

Maine Breast Cancer Coalition representatives Laurel Bezanson, Carol Beagan, Ro LeGasse’, and Christine Haiss and also Lynn Richards Reid of the Maine Medical Center Breast Care Center met with Maine Senators Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins, Congresswoman Chellie Pingree, and Congressman Mike Michaud to urge them to incorporate the principles of NBCC’s “Framework for a Health Care System Guaranteeing Access to Quality Health Care for All” into any health care reform legislation. The framework addresses a legislative approach to coverage issues. NBCC recognizes that access to quality health care goes beyond coverage and must have evidence-based medicine at its core. For highlights of the framework, see the article on the left of this page.

MBCC representatives also thanked our Maine legislators for their support of the Department of Defense Breast Cancer Research Program, a competitive peer-reviewed research program. This innovative program has changed the world of breast cancer research. The inclusion of consumers in every aspect of decision-making and the program’s unique grant opportunities have led to groundbreaking scientific advances.

For more information about the National Breast Cancer Coalition, its legislative priorities, or what you can do to advocate for effective health care reform go to www.stopbreastcancer.org or call toll-free 1-866-640-0969.



Maine Breast Cancer Specialty License Plate Update

You have probably seen these attractive license plates throughout Maine. Now that the Maine Breast Cancer Specialty license plates are available, there are more than 4,000 plates on the road!

Four thousand plates are the minimum needed to be maintained for the program to be sustained by the State. After two years, if the number of plates fall below this level for a sustained period, the State can drop the plate offering, so please consider getting a breast cancer specialty plate if you do not already have one.

The proceeds from this specialty plate help support breast cancer education, research, and patient support. *100% of these proceeds remain in Maine.* The proceeds are split equally three ways between three beneficiaries: The [Maine Breast Cancer Coalition](#) for our [Support Service Fund](#); the [Maine Cancer Foundation](#) for their Woman's Cancer Research Fund; [Maine Breast and Cervical Health Program](#) for their Mammogram Fund. Since the beginning of the license plate program, the MBCC Support Service Fund has received \$5,400 in proceeds from the plates.

The plates are available from BMV branch offices and most town offices. For more information go to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles Specialty Plate page at www.maine.gov/sos/bmv/registration/bcplate.htm or please call the Registration Unit at 207-624-9000, Extension 52149.

Love/Avon Army of Women Breast Cancer Prevention Campaign Shows Early Signs of Success

*Over 250,000 Volunteers Already Registered to Partner with
Breast Cancer Prevention Researchers within First Two Months*
(From an Army of Women Press Release December 15, 2008)

Just two months after its national launch, the Love/Avon Army of Women campaign, a partnership between the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation and the Avon Foundation, is already showing early signs of success. The groundbreaking initiative, which partners women volunteers with breast cancer prevention researchers, has already signed on over 259,000 women and issued two call-to-action research initiatives to immediate and successful results. The goal of the campaign is to recruit one million women of every age and ethnicity to partner with research scientists to find what causes breast cancer and take science 'beyond a cure' to *prevention*. The campaign serves as an online resource providing researchers much-needed and unprecedented, timely access to healthy women – a critical component to prevention research.

The program issued its first call-to-action research initiative, The Sister Study, within the first month of its launch. The Sister Study is a national study investigating how the environment and genes affect the chances of getting breast cancer. The study, which on average recruits a few hundred women per month towards the goal of 50,000 women, registered over 2,000 qualified Army of Women volunteers to be a part of the study within the first week of the call to action announcement. This is the largest number of women to join the study since its organizers, the National Institutes of Health, began recruiting women six years ago. (continued in next column)

Most recently, the campaign announced its second study, the "Milk Study", a research project to determine whether or not breast cancer and breast cancer risk can be accurately assessed from a breast milk sample and, hopefully, reduce biopsies amongst women who are nursing. Despite the complex criteria, over 25 qualified women were signed on to participate in the project within a matter of days.

"The response has been tremendous, and so encouraging," says Dr. Susan Love, president of the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation. "We knew women were ready and willing to do more to fight breast cancer, and these early results are certainly a testament to that. This is only the start!" Virtually all women not currently undergoing breast cancer treatment, including healthy women, breast cancer survivors, and women who are at high risk for developing breast cancer, can enroll in the Love/Avon Army of Women.

The campaign will continue to issue an average of two call-to-action studies each month. Scientists apply to the Army of Women for the opportunity to recruit volunteers for their research. Their studies undergo a thorough scientific, safety, and ethical review. An email with information on the approved research study is sent to volunteers in the Army of Women database. Eligible women who are interested in participating are put in touch with the researcher or a designated Army of Women research center. Participation in these studies may involve completing a questionnaire, or providing samples such as blood or saliva. All information is kept strictly confidential, and the women participate on a purely voluntary basis. For more information visit www.armyofwomen.org.

First Sister Study Results Reinforce The Importance Of Healthy Living

(from a Sister Study press release)

Women who maintain a healthy weight and who have lower perceived stress may be less likely to have chromosome changes associated with aging than obese and stressed women, according to a pilot study that was part of the Sister Study. The long-term Sister Study is looking at the environmental and genetic characteristics of women whose sister had breast cancer to identify factors associated with developing breast cancer. This early pilot used baseline questionnaires and samples provided by participants when they joined the Sister Study.

Two recent papers published in *Cancer Epidemiology Biomarkers and Prevention* looked at the length of telomeres, or the repeating DNA sequences that cap the ends of a person's chromosomes. Telomere length is one of the many measures being looked at in the Sister Study. Telomeres protect the ends of chromosomes and buffer them against the loss of important genes during cell replication. Over the course of an individual's lifetime, telomeres shorten, gradually becoming so short that they can trigger cell death. The papers show that factors such as obesity and perceived stress may shorten telomeres and accelerate the aging process.

"Together these two studies reinforce the need to start a healthy lifestyle early and maintain it," said Linda Birnbaum, Ph.D., the director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), part of the National Institutes of Health. The researchers who published these papers are from the NIEHS, which sponsors the Sister Study.

To find out more about these early findings or about the Sister Study go to www.sisterstudy.org.

MBCC Support Service Fund Receives Major Grants

The Maine Breast Cancer Coalition is pleased to announce significant grant awards for our [Support Service Fund](#) from three Maine-based foundations.

The **Maine Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure** awarded a major grant of \$50,000. This grant will significantly help us reach our \$90,000 budget goal and will allow us to provide a high level of assistance to a projected 200 Support Service Fund applicants this year. Our Komen grant not only provides a large contribution toward grant awards to qualified applicants, but also covers all of our low administrative costs. This allows 100% of all other donations to the Support Service Fund to go directly to applicants. Maine Breast Cancer Coalition is grateful to the Maine Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure for supporting our work with major grants for nine consecutive years. To find out more about Komen Maine Affiliate go to www.komenmaine.com.

The **Maine Cancer Foundation** (MCF) awarded \$7,500 from their "Patient Support" grant funding program. These grant funds will be designated for people who have been diagnosed with breast cancer and qualify for a grant from our Support Service Fund. MBCC would like to express our appreciation for the Maine Cancer Foundation's support over many years. To find out more about MCF go to www.maineccancer.org.

For the sixth consecutive year the **Borman Family Foundation** has awarded a grant to the Support Service Fund. This year's grant is \$3,000. We appreciate the Borman Family Foundation's commitment to support for the Fund.

If you would like to receive the MBCC newsletter via email (3 times per year) please send your name and email address to czh1@roadrunner.com.

MBCC respects your privacy. We will not share your name or email address with any other organization.

Maine Eagles Clubs: Major Donors to the Support Service Fund

We would like to thank the following Fraternal Order of Eagles Clubs for all their hard work and dedication conducting fundraising events to benefit our Support Service Fund. Eagles club volunteers plan and organize these fundraising events.

The **Brewer Eagles** and the affiliated "Pink Sock Foundation", a major supporter of the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition Support Service Fund, recently donated \$7968.36. MBCC was honored at a June 13 event at the Brewer Eagles Club.

The **Rumford Eagles**, also long-time major supporters, held a fundraising event to benefit the Fund on July 11. A Classic Car Show and Sock Hop were held, raising \$1323.50 for the Fund. Everyone had a great time!

Other recent Eagles contributions to the Fund include \$500 from the **Lewiston Eagles** Games Fund and \$100 from the **Rumford Eagles Ladies Auxiliary**.

The Fraternal Order of Eagles, an international, non-profit organization, strives to help people in need. To find out more about the Eagles go to www.foe.com for the national site or www.foemaine.com for the state site.

Support Service Fund News

The Maine Breast Cancer Coalition's Support Service Fund has for the past nine years been an important safety net for uninsured or underinsured Maine residents with breast cancer or breast health related needs. In today's faltering economy the need is even greater. Between January 1, 2009 and the end of July, the Support Service Fund Committee has received an unprecedented 135 applications. At this rate, we will receive applications well beyond our projected 200 for this calendar year, and expect to award a total of \$80,000 or more in grants. The foundations, organizations, businesses, and individuals who have contributed so generously to the Fund are making a real difference in the lives of Support Service Fund recipients. To find out more or to apply to the Support Service Fund, go to www.mainebreastcancer.org and click on "Services".

We would like to express our appreciation to the following groups, organizations or businesses that recently held fundraising events or made in-kind donations to the Support Service Fund:

Inverness Medical of Scarborough: \$2,771

St. Joseph Hospital Print Shop, Bangor, with special thanks to **Dave Votaur**: donation of the printing of Maine Breast Cancer Coalition newsletters

Intermed: \$250

Portland Shellfish Company with special thanks to **Emily Lane**: \$850

"Save the Ta-tas" Group: \$250

Women of the Androscoggin County United Bikers of Maine with special thanks to **Melanie Vincent**: \$269
in memory of **Bobbie Butler**.

Unum Group in memory of **Rodney Bailey**: \$75

Stonewall Kitchen, a long-term supporter of the Support Service Fund: \$1,232.81

We are grateful for the following recent individual donations for the Support Service Fund from:

Maureen and Paul Greene

Scott Whitney

Mary Agnes St. Pierre in memory of her daughter **Elaine**

Sandra Plette

Hall School PTO in honor of **Amanda Rowe**

How You Can Help

The **Support Service Fund** is only partially supported by grants from major foundations. MBCC also relies on contributions from local groups, businesses, or individuals. If your community group, business, or organization would like to dedicate all or part of the proceeds from a fundraising effort to the **Support Service Fund**, contact grants chairperson Christine Haiss at 207-938-4018 or czh1@roadrunner.com. One hundred percent of these donations will go to **Support Service Fund** recipients, as our low administrative costs are covered by our Maine Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure grant.

Or please consider a tax-deductible donation of any amount. See the donation and membership form below for details. Checks should be made payable to MBCC. Please write "**Support Service Fund**" on the memo line if you would like your donation to be designated for the Fund.

MBCC is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization.

Yes! *I want to support the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition's work.*

I want to be active in the *Maine Breast Cancer Coalition*. Please contact me.

I want to become a member of *MBCC*. Enclosed is a check for \$15 (individual) or \$100 (business or organization membership) payable to *MBCC*.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (day) _____ (eve.) _____
Email _____
(if you would like to be on our newsletter email list)

The Maine Breast Cancer Coalition is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization.

I want to make a tax-deductible contribution. Enclosed is a check payable to *MBCC* for \$_____.
In honor/memory of _____

I want to donate the following gifts or services:

Please mail your check for membership and/or contribution with this form (or a photocopy) to:
Maine Breast Cancer Coalition
499 Broadway
PMB 362
Bangor, ME 04401-3460

