



Women's Cancer Task Force

Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center

January/February/March 2003

Mission Statement: Empowering women, through knowledge and support, to gain optimal health.

SECRET SISTERS MAMMOGRAPHY FUND TO PARTNER WITH RIVERBEND CANCER SOCIETY

The women's cancer task force has agreed to establish a screening mammography program for underserved women. We will be utilizing funds raised during the *September 25th 2002 Secret Sisters Luncheon and Style show* and through the memberships in the Secret Sister Society. The board of the RiverBend Cancer Society (formerly known as the Cancer Society of St. Joseph County) has agreed to administer the program.

The proceeds raised in this event will be used to pay for screening mammograms for women who qualify for the state Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (BCCP) but who are under the age of 50. The age group between 40 and 50 yrs. whose income is 200% of the poverty guidelines are not presently eligible for a screening mammogram even if they have a family history of breast cancer. The "Secret Sisters" monies will allow all of them, even without a family history, to have their screening mammogram. If cancer is detected or further testing is needed to document their breast health, their follow-up treatment will be covered by the BCCP treatment Program.

This agreement was reached after several months of planning by the SSS Mammography fund committee led by Dr. Michael Method, Director of Oncology at SJRMC-SB and advisor to the task force, Carol Norris, Senior Director of Oncology Services, Joan Lennon, Coordinator of the task force and Tim Sexton, Vice President, Saint Joseph Care Foundation. The Care Foundation, a 501 C3 corporation, presently holds and administers the distribution of the funds at no cost to the Women's Task Force. It is the Saint Joseph Care Foundation, which will allocate the funds to the RiverBend Cancer Society on a quarterly basis.

In order for the River Bend Cancer Society to administer this program, the task force agreed to use a small portion of the proceeds for a part time clerical worker in the River Bend office. It was also agreed that the task force would allocate funds toward publicity to alert the eligible women in our

BCCP region about the Secret Sisters Mammography program.

In examining state data on income guidelines it is estimated some 8,000 women would be eligible to qualify for the SSS funds and BCCP, according to Dr. Method.

The need to screen at risk and underserved women not covered presently by the BCCP program but assure that they are eligible for treatment if a breast cancer is found is the primary concern. Members of the task force and all who have contributed financially to this cause as underwriters and members of the Secret Sisters Society shared this concern. Partnering with the existing program assures us that the women will have both follow-up and treatment.

In addition, all the funds raised remain in the community and will be administered by an agency – RiverBend Cancer Society that has a proven record of service and is recognized as one of the most successful administrators of the BCCP program in the state of Indiana.

According to Mary Heck of River Bend Cancer Society, "the hope is to have the program up and running by March 1st". More information can be obtained by calling the RiverBend Office at 234-3136 or the Women's Task Force at 574-472-6095 or you may visit the task force site www.womenstaskforce.org

Eligibility for the program, is based on **INCOME** not assets.

Please continue to be a "Secret Sister" to others. Encourage others to join the Secret Sister Society with a contribution of \$50.00 and to attend our next Luncheon and Style Show, *Wednesday September 24, 2003 at 12:00 noon in the Joyce Center (University of Notre Dame)*.

If you know of any woman who might qualify and has been delaying or simply neglecting her breast or cervical screenings because of finances, lack of insurance or inadequate insurance coverage, please direct them to the RiverBend office located in the United Health Service office, 711 E. Colfax, South Bend, In 46617.

Please encourage them to call the office, at 574-234-3136, speak with Mary, April or Joni and fill out the enrollment form.

“DID YOU KNOW” COMMERCIAL NOW IN SPANISH

The recent efforts of the Women’s Task Force to dispel myths and misconception held on women’s health resulted in three video segments aired on local and cable stations during the months of November and December. Seeing the need to reach the growing Hispanic population in the community the commercials were adapted to Spanish and will run for one year at no cost by the Spanish network Telemundo.

The task force has developed a partnership with the outreach arm of SJRMC and in particular, Susannah Bueno, Multi-cultural Access representative SJRMC.

The commercials featured various women from our community running or walking and ended with our signature closing “Talk to Your Doctor”. The production of this commercial fulfilled one of the goals of the task force to educate and raise awareness and ultimately reduce the cancer deaths in our community through education.

The task force absorbed the cost of the production utilizing the talents of Lou Pierce of Big Ideas Company and the airing costs were paid for by the marketing department of SJRMC. Thanks to everyone involved in this project.

TASK FORCE WEBSITE CONTINUES TO EXPAND

Visit our Website www.womenstaskforce.org and you will find that the Website continues to evolve as new initiatives of the task force grow.

We will continue to expand into areas of cancer education in the next few months. Presently we are featuring more information on breast, uterus, lung, colon and melanoma. We continue to work with cancer survivors, members of the task force and the medical community to improve and update our Website. Terry McIntee and Dave Lundal of Information services at SJRMC have made a committed effort to make this a success.

NEW INITIATIVES FOR THE TASK FORCE *Colorectal Cancer*

The women’s task force continues to expand its partnership with other health agencies in the

community. Planning has taken place for an initiative to correlate with March as colorectal cancer awareness month. Stephanie Boyd Rogers, Cancer Control Coordinator with the Northern Indiana Cancer Consortium continues her passion for this effort again this year as she has done in the past. Stephanie’s leadership and commitment in this cause is unwavering, since her husband lost his battle with colon cancer at age 43. Planning for a PSA promoting healthy lifestyle and early detection are being developed by Lou Pierce, Big Ideas Company with a committee, which includes Mary Jo Halbritter, a colon cancer survivor and member of the task force, Nancy White and Dr. Method.

Melanoma Campaign

Preliminary meetings have been hosted by the women’s Task Force to pursue an initiative on skin cancer/Melanoma. This effort is targeted for May of 2003. In this effort we are soliciting the support of the community: Jack Schuster and Michael Toal, melanoma survivors, and Nancy Foldesi and Jan Petty from the task force are key to this effort. Holly Harris, M.D. Local dermatologist, Carol Norris and Dr. Method, from the medical community are part of the WTF effort to inform and educate to the earliest detection of skin changes that pose serious health risk.

Health Risks/ Smoking

Recognizing that cigarette-smoking habits begin early, the Women’s task force is hosting community health representatives to brainstorm ideas for a campaign. It is the goal of the task force to target young girls (age 14) in a smoking prevention program. Emphasizing future child bearing and cervical and bladder cancer issues this campaign will seek to deter young woman before they have begun the smoking habit.

The committee will welcome any community or task force members who wish to join this community effort. Please call our task force office 574-472-6095 or go to our Website at www.womenstaskforce.org.

NEWS FROM OUR SUPPORT GROUPS

Gyna girls, our Ovarian Cancer support group continues to meet on the first Monday of each month at The Edison Lakes Women’s Center (across from Honkers). Meeting time is 4:30 p.m. and the group is open to all women who have experienced any gynecological cancer.

Led by Nancy White, the group is excited about plans for September 2003, which is Gynecological Cancer Month. A promotional event is in the works with Graffis furniture thanks to the Vanderhayden Family. Part of the proceeds will benefit the Women's Task Force and the Gyna Girls support group in continued efforts toward early detection, and survival from Ovarian Cancer.

This year's Gynecological Cancer awareness efforts in September will target the young students in nursing programs in our community.

TASK FORCE SPEAKERS BUREAU

We have been receiving requests to speak with community groups regarding the work of the task force. Nancy Foldesi is in the process of developing a presentation in April for the Hospice volunteers. We will be seeking more members of the task force to comprise the speakers bureau. Please call the WTF office if this is something that would interest you.

The marketing department of SJRMC will be compiling an informational visual aid that can be taken to health fairs, conferences and community outreach describing the mission and background of the volunteers who comprise the task force.

LOOK FOR OUR LOGO

At the April 16th meeting of the task force, Wendy Dietrick of WJW designs will have some

preliminary ideas for our new logo!! Don't miss this meeting. We need your opinions !

MEETING REMINDER:

The task force meeting date has been changed from Wednesday, April 9 to Wednesday, April 16 at 12:00 noon in the Radiation/Oncology conference room.

There is no meeting of the entire task force during March. However, smaller group planning meetings are on schedule.

***Donations to the Women's Cancer Task Force can be made in memory of loved ones and special friends. Please think of the Women's Task Force when mailing a donation. You can make your check payable to the Women's Cancer Task Force, 707 E. Cedar, Suite 222, South Bend, IN 46617.

***We need you e-mail addresses. We are attempting to send as many newsletters as we can via the internet. This enables us to keep down costs so that more funds are available for programs and support groups. If you received this issue through the mail there is a good chance we do not have your e-mail address. Please e-mail Lawsond@sjrmc.com so that we can add you to our address book.

VISION

The Women's Cancer Task Force is made up of women cancer survivors who have come together to raise awareness and develop initiatives regarding women's health issues. Initiatives include recommending and implementing programs that relate to women and cancer, promoting early detection, explaining treatment options, providing supportive care and celebrating survivorship.