

IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY FOR BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER PATIENTS

Direct Access enrollment removes a significant barrier to receiving services

Public Health Problem

- Problems with access to breast and cervical cancer prevention and treatment services have been the subject of national publicity and legislative efforts in many states.
- Pennsylvania women seeking free treatment for diagnosed breast or cervical cancer under the state's Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act Medicaid provisions were required to visit a Department of Health HealthyWoman Program provider for an eligibility determination, a barrier to getting needed services.
- Proposed legislation to deal with enrollment issues in the HealthyWoman Program contained flaws.
- The Pennsylvania Departments of Health and Public Welfare decided they could improve the eligibility process through administrative action, eliminating the need for legislation.

Program

- The Pennsylvania Departments of Health and Public Welfare amended the intake process for the HealthyWoman Program, the state's name for its version of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.
- They created an enrollment system called *Direct Access* that eliminates the need for women to physically visit an office for a second consultation with a HealthyWoman Program provider in order to enroll in the program and be eligible for treatment under Pennsylvania Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act provisions for Medicaid clients.
- The program contractor deals with barriers to enrollment, such as language or transportation and determines a woman's preference for case management services by phone or in person.
- A one-page fact sheet for clients explains the enrollment process, the program Web site supplies downloadable forms and nine thousand health care providers received information on Department of Health and Department of Public Welfare breast and cervical cancer services and an explanation of the *Direct Access* process.

Impact

- Direct Access is now in effect, removing a significant barrier that had reduced women's access to vital breast and cervical cancer treatment services such as chemotherapy, radiation therapy, surgery, and/or antiestrogen drug follow-up.
- In the first quarter of operation almost half of the women enrolled in the Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Program took advantage of the new, expedited process to begin receiving their breast and cervical cancer treatment services as quickly as possible.

Contact

J. Boyle

Pennsylvania Department of Health

717-783-1457

jboyle@state.pa.us