

## **BCDP Awarded Third Year of Funding by New York State Assembly**

We are very pleased to announce that funding for the Breast Cancer Demonstration Project (BCDP) will be continued for a third year as a result of the recently adopted 1999-2000 State Budget. The project, which seeks to develop a comprehensive model of integrated breast cancer services in a network setting, is currently in its second year. The project works with seven health care sites to pilot and refine elements of the model. Major accomplishments last year include publishing "Building Systems of Breast Cancer Care: A Comprehensive Review of Literature and Web Resources," convening the project advisory board, and developing project plans for the sites.

With the third year of funding, the BCDP will continue working with the sites to synthesize their experiences into a model for dissemination throughout New York State. Special thanks are extended to Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried, Helene Weinstein, and Keith Wright for their continuing support of the BCDP.

### **Site Visits Valuable to BCDP Members**

A great way to learn about innovations and strategies for breast cancer care is by visiting different sites that are treating breast cancer patients. On August

5, the BCDP sponsored a trip for project participants to two such facilities: the Ann and Jules Gottlieb Comprehensive Women's Center at Long Island Jewish Hospital and the Cancer Control Clinic at Harlem Hospital.


The day began at the Gottlieb Center in Manhasset, which is part of the Manhasset Ambulatory Pavilion. Joanne Robinson, Director of Program Planning for the North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System, coordinated the speakers and tour of the facility. Marie Chen, M.D., gave a presentation on the process and philosophy of breast cancer diagnosis at the facility. She was joined by nurse practitioners, who described their role in the diagnostic process.

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The Breast Cancer Demonstration Project

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HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK STATE



The goals of the Gottlieb Comprehensive Women's Center are to provide total breast care within one facility and reduce the time from discovery of the abnormality to diagnosis. Along with many process innovations, care is shaped by a multi-disciplinary approach and same-day access to services. Patients begin their visit with a mammography, the results of which are given when they meet with their doctor. Dr. Chen, a breast surgery specialist, offers on-site consultation and biopsy when needed. Often patients receive a stereotactic biopsy with an immediate cytopathology reading. Patients then consult with a number of allied professionals to discuss their options. Complementary services are also available on site including bone densitometry, pain management, and physical therapy.

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Continuing to the Ronald H. Brown Pavilion of Harlem Hospital Center, the group was hosted by Brenda Blane, Regional Director of the National Black Leadership Initiative on Cancer and the Administrator of the Cancer Control Clinic. Ms. Blane provided an overview of the computer patient tracking system, and Dr. Alicia Gorasy gave a tour of the Cancer Control Clinic. This clinic is held twice weekly, on Thursday afternoons and on Saturday mornings.

The clinic uses an innovative system of "navigators" to assist patients in accessing screening and diagnostic care. The navigators also serve as contact and support persons for patients as they continue to receive care. With 48% of the clinic's patients having no health insurance, and 30% covered either by Medicaid or Medicare, one of the primary responsibilities of the patient navigators is to act as advocates for treatment coverage. Navigators also assist with accessing other services for these patients. Many of the patients are new to Harlem Hospital, having been referred through someone other than a doctor. Nearly half of the patients that the clinic screens are under age 50. In a recent seven-month period, the clinic saw 1,879 patients and reported 40 positive biopsies.

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Participants reported that the two site visits were very informative and offered an opportunity for networking and sharing ideas. They also said they appreciated learning how each facility has shaped its program to meet the needs of its patients. Attendees enjoyed being able to view the layout of these two hos-

pitals; this information was especially useful to sites that are upgrading and/or expanding their breast cancer facilities. On behalf of all participants, we appreciate the work that each of the facilities did to prepare for the visits. We also hope that other such events can be developed in the future.

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## Guidelines for Assessing Genetic Risk Available from New York State Department of Health

The American College of Medical Genetics Foundation, with support from the New York State Department of Health, has recently published Genetic Susceptibility to Breast and Ovarian Cancer: Assessment, Counseling and Testing Guidelines. Primary care providers can use this resource in determining the appropriateness of genetic testing and to educate and counsel about genetic risk. The authors emphasize that genetic predisposition to cancer is only one of many risk factors for breast cancer, and that genetic testing bears both benefits and burdens for patients.

The guidelines include a sample form for obtaining a three-generation patient history, a protocol for assessment, a listing of specialists in cancer genetics risk assessment and counseling, and a bibliography of materials for patients and providers. Copies of the guidelines are available from the New York State Genetics Services Program by calling (518) 486-2215. The full document is also available on the New York State Department of Health Web site at [www.health.state.ny.us](http://www.health.state.ny.us).



## Susan G. Komen Foundation announces Clinical Trials Initiative

On August 16, the Susan G. Komen Foundation launched Clinical Research — Affiliates Funding Trials (CRAFT) to help fund cancer treatment clinical trials at the local level. Concerned that fewer than five percent of adult cancer patients in the United States are participating in cancer treatment clinical trials, the Komen Foundation developed this initiative to increase participation and access.

According to the Komen Foundation press release, the “goals of CRAFT are to increase the capacity for breast cancer research at the local level, to make existing information about clinical trials readily available to breast cancer patients and physicians, and to enable more women to participate in clinical trials.”

“Project CRAFT is designed to address some of the barriers to patient participation in clinical trials,” program spokesperson Diana Rowden said. “The CRAFT initiative will complement existing Komen affiliate grant programs and will provide local

funds to help cover costs associated with clinical trial implementation and participation.”

Seven Komen affiliates will act as pilot sites for CRAFT. New York City is one of those pilots. In a conversation with BCDP staff, Ms. Rowden indicated that the New York Komen affiliate is in the process of creating its community profile and developing a request for proposals. Although CRAFT will not pay for physician fees, the program will support any costs associated with clinical trials for cancer. Ms. Rowden went on to say that CRAFT provides support only for those trials approved by the National Cancer Institute. The Komen Foundation anticipated committing project funds by the end of this year.

For more information about CRAFT, please contact Louise Milone, Executive Director of the New York City Komen affiliate. She can be reached at (212) 293-0570 or [louisem@nyraceforthecure.org](mailto:louisem@nyraceforthecure.org).

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## Breast Cancer on the Internet:

Resources for Staff and Patients

*The following Web sites may be useful when looking for information on breast cancer on the Internet.*

**[www.guideline.gov](http://www.guideline.gov)** — This site provides a clearing-house and overview of clinical guidelines. By entering the disease and/or the guideline source, users can gather information and compare guidelines. Sources cited include the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American College of Surgeons, the Food and Drug Administration, and others.

**[www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)** — Sponsored by the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), this site provides updates and information to Medicare beneficiaries about their coverage. The “Wellness” link on this site provides information about services, a calendar of events, and mammography information.

**[www.cancerfatigue.org](http://www.cancerfatigue.org)** — This site provides information on cancer fatigue to cancer patients and their caregivers. This Web site is a product of the Oncology Nursing Society. The site includes an area where users can have questions answered by oncology nurses, information on chemotherapy-induced anemia and other causes of cancer fatigue, and tips for coping with this condition.

**[www.cancerlinks.org](http://www.cancerlinks.org)** — This site is devoted to helping people search the Web for information on cancer and cancer treatment. It has information on breast, cervical, colorectal, endometrial, ovarian, and 17 other types of cancer. This site is for patients and others who may be new to searching health-related sites on the Internet.

# News

FROM THE BCDP PARTICIPANTS

**New York Community Hospital (NYCH) of Brooklyn** has begun a women's health initiative in conjunction with representatives from many allied women's health fields and the local Orthodox Jewish and Russian populations. The Hospital's Women's Health Committee also is helping to design and implement a new Women's Health Service that will include a new radiology mammography suite, an ambulatory pavilion next door to the hospital, and a boutique for breast cancer patients. Like many ethnic and cultural groups, Russian and Orthodox Jewish women do not routinely access preventative health care. As part of this initiative, NYCH has hired a woman from the community to coordinate outreach and education for these under-served populations.

**Lutheran Medical Center** in Brooklyn has also convened a multi-disciplinary group to oversee the redesign and renovation of its women's health space. This group is assessing utilization data and follow-up care for women who are seen in the clinic setting. Lutheran Medical Center is preparing to join the Healthy Women's Partnership of the New York State Department of Health.

**The National Alliance of Breast Cancer Organizations (NABCO)** reports that the 1999 edition of its Resource List is now available. This book provides information on the many types of resources and information sources pertaining to breast cancer. The Resource List may be useful to outreach and education planners, resource librarians, and support counselors. Copies of the Resource List are available for \$3 each by calling (888) 806-2226.

## Advisory Board Chair named President and CEO of North General Hospital

On August 2, the Chairman of the BCDP Advisory Board, Dr. Harold Freeman, began a new role as President and Chief Executive Officer of North General Hospital in Harlem. Long an advocate of cancer care for minorities and the poor, Dr. Freeman previously had been the Chief of Surgery and Director of the Cancer Control Clinic at Harlem Hospital Center. We are honored that Dr. Freeman will be continuing to serve as the Chair of the BCDP Advisory Board and look forward to working with him in this new capacity.

## Possible features for future editions of *Mosaic*:

The following topics will be discussed in future editions of *Mosaic*. We welcome your input on these or any other breast cancer related topics that you would like this newsletter to address. Please send your comments to Virginia Tyler Homsy, Project Director at [vhomsy@hanys.org](mailto:vhomsy@hanys.org), or call her at (518) 431-7754.

- Multi-disciplinary cancer care: what is it, why do we need it, and what is its future?
- Information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention conference on meeting the challenges of comprehensive cancer control.
- Breast cancer awareness: ongoing professional education about breast cancer.

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