BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH IN THE DETROIT COC

OCTOBER 2025

NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

- Breast Cancer Awareness Month began in 1985. It has become one of the most recognized health campaigns in the United States.
- Breast cancer a common cancer among women. Early detection can mean a 90%+ five-year survival rate when found in local stages.
- In Detroit, breast cancer rates are similar to the state average, but mortality is higher than state and national levels.
- Black women in Detroit face higher breast cancer death rates than white women, even though incidence is comparable across groups. This disparity is among the most documented in major U.S. cities.

BARRIERS FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

- Competing needs often come before preventive care.
- Logistics are a challenge because it can be hard to get transport, a phone, or results.
- Knowledge and trust are barriers, as many don't hear health messages or fear costs.
- System hurdles make it harder, with insurance and follow-ups often out of reach.
- Only about 44% of women experiencing homelessness in Michigan receive mammograms, compared to ~76% nationally. Many cancers are found late, when treatment is harder and survival is lower.







WHY IT MATTERS IN DETROIT

- Poverty and housing instability make it harder to get preventive health care.
- Local health systems run screening programs, but access gaps remain.
- Mobile mammography vans and neighborhood outreach are lifelines for people without regular health care.
- Addressing breast cancer is also about addressing inequity — Detroit women of color and those experiencing homelessness are at higher risk of late diagnoses and worse outcomes.
- Improving access to screening and follow-up could prevent unnecessary deaths and strengthen community health.



LOCAL RESPONSES & OPPORTUNITIES

- Detroit Health Department partners with local nonprofits to run breast and cervical cancer screening events.
- Mobile mammography vans visit neighborhoods and shelters during October. Expanding their hours and reach could save lives.
- Patient navigation means pairing outreach workers with screening patients to help ensure follow-up after abnormal results.
- Community outreach brings breast health education into shelters, drop-in centers, and food programs so that people experiencing homelessness hear about free screening opportunities.

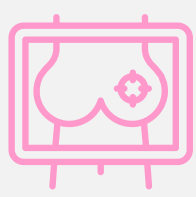
GET INVOLVED



Advocate
Ask city, state, and federal leaders to fund mobile screening and navigation services.



Support Local Groups
Volunteer or donate to Detroit groups that connect health and housing to prevent breast cancer.



Get screened
Schedule your mammogram or encourage loved ones to do so to prevent breast cancer!

SOURCES AND MORE INFORMATION:

- DETROIT HEALTH DEPARTMENT: DETROITMI.GOV/DEPARTMENTS/DETROIT-HEALTH-DEPARTMENT
- KARMANOS CANCER INSTITUTE: KARMANOS.ORG/KARMANOS/KARMANOS-HOME
- HENRY FORD HEALTH: HENRYFORD.COM
- SUSAN G. KOMEN DETROIT: KOMEN.ORG
- CAM RESOURCE PAGE: CAMDETROIT.ORG/RESOURCES/
- NATIONAL BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER EARLY DETECTION PROGRAM (NBCCEDP): CDC.GOV/CANCER/NBCCEDP

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HOMELESS ACTION NETWORK OF DETROIT