

Mount Zion Community Development, Inc.

“ECHO” – Enhancing Collaborative Health Options & Opportunities

Mount Zion Community Development, Inc. (MZCD) is committed to heightening community awareness of the “burden of cancer” through advocacy and supportive services to individuals and families via educational resources. To that end, MZCD sponsored the “ECHO” (Enhancing Collaborative Health Options & Opportunities) event. The event was held in collaboration with the Baptist Ministers Union’s City-Wide Revival, which took place May 16-20, 2016 at Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church of Asheville, Inc., Dr. John H. Grant, Pastor. Dr. L. C. Ray serves as President of the Baptist Ministers Union.

Health disparities are differences in the incidence, prevalence, and mortality of a disease and the related adverse



health conditions that exist among specific population groups. These groups may be characterized by gender, age, race or ethnicity, education, income, social class, disability, geographic location, or sexual orientation.

According to CDC’s Office of Minority Health and Health Equity, life expectancy and overall health have improved in recent years for most Americans, but not all Americans are benefiting equally. CDC monitors trends in new cancer cases and cancer deaths to identify groups that are more affected by the disease.

During the “ECHO” (Enhancing Collaborative Health Options & Opportunities) event, program partici-

pants received educational information about breast, cervical, colorectal, lung, prostate and skin cancer.

Presenters were: Belinda K. Grant, Executive Director, Mount Zion Community Development, Inc., Kathey Avery, RN, ABIPA, as well as presentations from Mrs. Joyce Oliphant & Mrs. Doretha Keeling, who provided phenomenal testimonies about their personal experience with cancer. Additionally, Lakesha McDay spoke about her role as Director of Diversity Inclusion & Health Equity at Mission Health. She has been in this role nine months.

ECHO was sponsored by the NC Cancer Prevention & Control Branch, the Baptist Ministers Union, Mount Zion Community Development, Inc., Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church of Asheville, Inc., and One Youth At A Time.



Belinda K. Grant, Executive Director of Mount Zion Community Development, Inc.
Photo: Urban News

Lung Cancer

According to the NC Cancer Control and Prevention Branch, lung cancer refers to any cancer that forms in the tissues of the bronchus or lung. In 2012, lung cancer was the leading cause of death in North Carolina (29.6%).

Lung cancer is mostly preventable by not smoking and by reducing exposure to secondhand smoke, radon and other environmental hazards.

Signs & Symptoms of Lung Cancer

- Coughing that gets worse or doesn’t go away
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing
- Coughing up blood
- Feeling extremely fatigued
- Sudden weight loss

Source: NC Cancer Prevention & Control Branch

Cervical Cancer

Cervical cancer is cancer that forms in tissues of the cervix which is the mouth of the uterus. All women are at risk for cervical cancer. It most often occurs in women over age 30.

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the main cause of cervical cancer. HPV is a common virus that is passed from one person to another during sex.

At least half of all sexually active people will have an HPV infection at some point in their lives but most of these are cleared by the body. Only a few women will develop cervical cancer from an HPV infection.

Prevention

Cervical cancer is easily detected through screening and can be prevented with the HPV vaccine. HPV vaccines are

available and recommended for both males and females ages 9 to 26. An important way women can prevent cervical cancer is to have regular screening tests starting at age 21. Two tests can help prevent cervical cancer.

Pap test (or Pap smear)

- This test looks for precancers, which are cell changes on the cervix that may become cervical cancer if they are not treated early.

Human papillomavirus (HPV) test

- This test looks for the virus that can cause the cell changes that may become cervical cancer if they are not treated early.

RISK FACTORS FOR CERVICAL CANCER

Gender – simply being female

Infection – having had an HPV infection

Cigarette Smoking

Oral contraception use for five or more years

High number of live births

HPV exposure – having sex with a partner who is infected with HPV

Source: NC Cancer Prevention & Control Branch

Women who are vaccinated against HPV still need to have regular Pap tests to screen for cervical cancer.

Source: NC Cancer Prevention & Control Branch

Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal Cancer develops in the colon and/or rectum: The colon is the large intestine or large bowel and the rectum is the section at the end of the large intestine.

According to the NC Comprehensive Cancer Program, colorectal cancer was the second leading cause of cancer death in NC in 2012 (8.3%). An estimated 4,746 people in NC would be diagnosed with colorectal cancer. 1,665 people in NC would die from colorectal cancer in 2014.

But, colorectal cancer is largely preventable. Screening tests include:

– A colonoscopy, which is an exam used to detect changes or abnormalities in the colon. This test can find polyps which can be removed before they become cancer.

– A Fecal Blood Test (FOBT) and Fecal Immunochemical Blood Test (FIT).

– A sigmoidoscopy, which is an exam that can detect changes or abnormalities in the lower part of the colon. This test can also remove polyps before they become cancer.

Importantly, it is estimated that 40 out of every 100 deaths from large stage colorectal cancer are preventable if ALL adults aged 50 or older were routinely screened. According to the American Institute for Cancer Research, although colorectal cancer increases with age, 50% of this cancer is preventable by diet, physical activity and weight management.

Source: NC Cancer Prevention & Control Branch



MOUNT ZION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, INC.

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