



Susan G. Komen for the Cure
Greater Atlanta Affiliate
Atlanta Breast Cancer
Community Profile Report

KOMEN STUDY FINDS LACK OF INSURANCE AMONG ATLANTANS LEADS TO DEADLY BREAST CANCER DIAGNOSES

Through a broad-reaching community assessment, Komen Atlanta has discovered that a lack of insurance is driving an increase in late-stage breast cancer diagnoses. The Affiliate recently completed its Community Profile Report, a rigorous qualitative and quantitative study of the breast cancer landscape in Atlanta. The study is the only one of its kind in Atlanta and was conducted to find the needs and gaps in breast health services in the 10-county metro area*.

Findings

- Fulton, Cobb, Forsyth, Cherokee and Rockdale counties have higher breast cancer incidence rates than both Georgia and the US.
- In the metro area, Fulton, DeKalb and Clayton counties have the highest incidence rates for late-stage breast cancer, the deadliest form.
- Lack of insurance is the number one barrier to proper breast health care.
- Other barriers to care include insufficient support services including transportation and mobile mammography.
- The majority of women surveyed were misinformed about risk factors and outcomes of the disease.
 - Most cited family history as the greatest risk factor. In fact, heredity accounts for only five to ten percent of cases. Most women diagnosed with breast cancer have no known risk factors other than being female and getting older.
 - Most respondents believed that death is a common outcome of a breast cancer. In reality, when breast cancer is diagnosed in the earliest stage, the five-year survival rate is over 95 percent.
 - Such misinformation may contribute to lower screening rates and more late-stage diagnoses.

Needs and Priorities

Komen Atlanta has selected Clayton, DeKalb, Fulton and Gwinnett counties as areas of priority based on incidence rates, late-stage diagnoses, ethnic diversity and median family income. The following are a sample of the needs found in Atlanta's breast cancer community. Komen Atlanta will work to fulfill these needs through its grants, education and advocacy programs.

- Funding for low-cost screening and diagnostic services for the uninsured and underinsured that ultimately lead to a reduction in late-stage diagnosis of breast cancer.
- Breast health services for the south metro area.
- Culturally-relevant programs.
- Improvements to Georgia's *BreasTEST and More* program.
- Maintaining or increasing Georgia's budget and policy initiatives that impact detection and access to care for breast cancer patients.
- Ensuring that Care Management Organizations and other private health plans provide optimal coverage for prevention, diagnosis and management of breast cancer.

*The 10-county metro area includes nearly 44% of Georgia's population and is comprised of the following counties: Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale.

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