



# COMMUNITY PROFILE REPORT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Susan G. Komen for the Cure®  
Western New York Affiliate



2011

## Executive Summary

### **Introduction**

*Born of a promise between two sisters, Ambassador Nancy G. Brinker, founding chair of Susan G. Komen for the Cure® has built Komen for the Cure in an effort to do everything possible to end breast cancer forever. In 1982, that promise became Susan G. Komen for the Cure and launched the global breast cancer movement. Today, Komen for the Cure is the world's largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists.*

Through programs like the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure® Series, Rally for the Cure™, and various other fundraising activities, education programs, and awareness events, the Komen Western New York (WNY) Affiliate raises hundreds of thousands of dollars each year directed toward the breast health and breast cancer burden in WNY. Since its inception in 2000, Komen WNY has awarded nearly \$3 million in programs and grants to improve access to breast health care and provide outreach and education in the community.

To meet our promise to save lives, every two years the Western New York Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure® conducts and relies on the Community Profile process to strategically guide our work and grants funding priorities. The Community Profile needs assessment includes an overview of demographic and breast cancer statistics that highlight target areas, groups or issues pertaining to the breast cancer burden in the 8 counties of Western New York. In order to ensure effective and targeted breast cancer programs it is important to understand what programs, and services, gaps in services, needs and barriers exist. The Community Profile also includes analysis of the community within – including the voices of those living in the priority areas and representing target populations. Driven by the greatest needs identified in this Community Profile, Komen WNY will prioritize the City of Buffalo and Cattaraugus County in funding grant awards.

Our service area consists of eight counties: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans and Wyoming. The service area borders Canada to the north, Lake Erie to the west and Pennsylvania to the south, covering both dense urban centers and remote rural areas. Through grant funded programs, Komen WNY balances its impact in both areas, with special emphasis on reaching underserved populations.

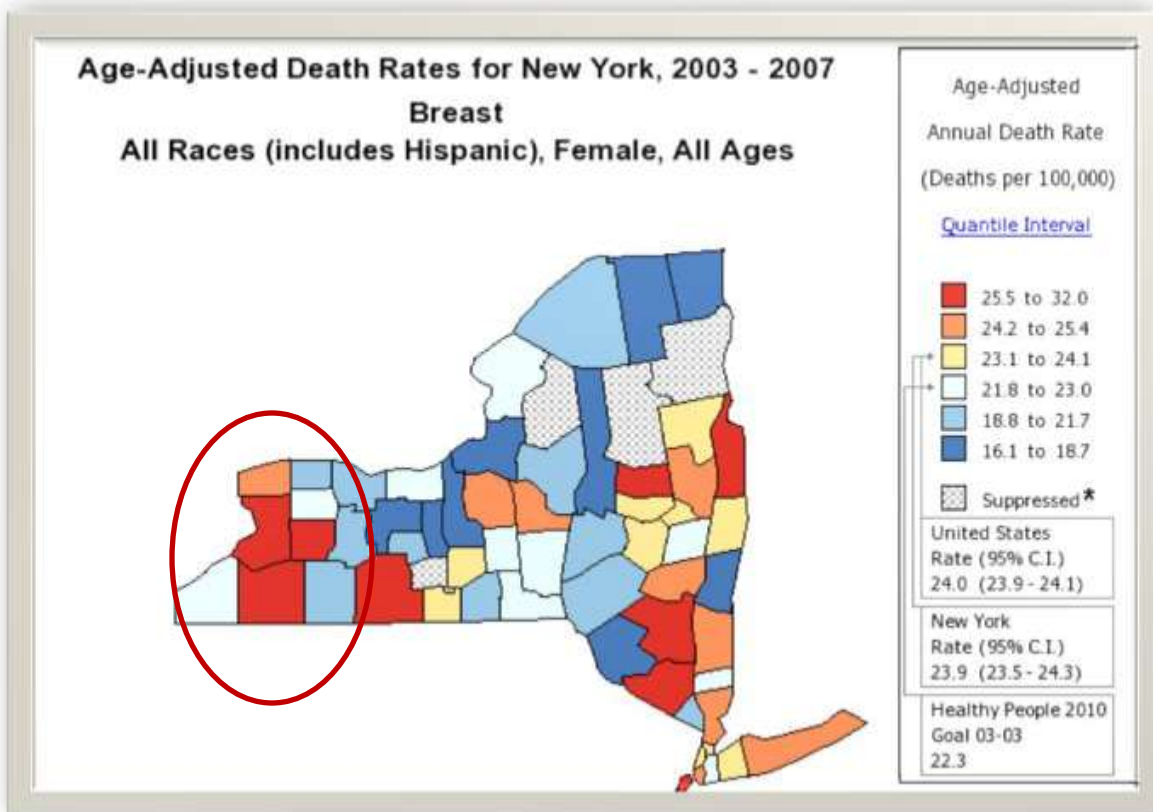
### **Statistics and Demographic Review**

In its quest to paint a picture of breast cancer in the WNY service area, Komen WNY utilized statistics from a variety of sources including the US Census Bureau, New York State Cancer Registry, State Cancer Profiles on Cancer Control P.L.A.N.E.T., Thomson Reuters and the Center for Disease Control's Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS).

Table 1: Breast Cancer Mortality in WNY

| County         | Mortality<br>(Age<br>adjusted, per<br>100,000) | Actual<br>Deaths | % of<br>regional<br>deaths | Total Population | % of<br>population |
|----------------|--|------------------|----------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Allegany       | 21.1   | 6                | 2%                         | 48,946           | 3%                 |
| Cattaraugus    | 26.4   | 14               | 5%                         | 80,317           | 5%                 |
| Chautauqua     | 22.9   | 21               | 7%                         | 134,905          | 9%                 |
| Erie           | 28   | 184              | 65%                        | 919,040          | 59%                |
| Genesee        | 22.5   | 9                | 3%                         | 60,079           | 4%                 |
| Niagara        | 24.4   | 35               | 12%                        | 216,469          | 14%                |
| Orleans        | 18.9   | 5                | 2%                         | 42,883           | 3%                 |
| Wyoming        | 32   | 8                | 3%                         | 42,155           | 3%                 |
| <b>Totals:</b> |  | <b>282</b>       |                            | <b>1,544,794</b> |                    |

As a whole, the mortality from breast cancer in the region is higher than both the United States (24.0) and New York State (23.7) average (Cancer Control P.L.A.N.E.T, 2011). Two counties, Allegany and Orleans, have mortality that falls below the Healthy People 2010 goal (22.3 deaths per 100,000 people) (Cancer Control P.L.A.N.E.T, 2011). Healthy People is an initiative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that provides benchmarks designed to identify and reduce the most significant preventable health threats within the United States, which includes measure for breast cancer. The overall goals of the program are to increase the quality and length of life and to eliminate health disparities. The Counties in the region with the highest mortality rates are also among the highest in the entire state. Wyoming County is highest both in our region and in New York State at a rate of 32 deaths per 100,000 people; followed by Erie County (28.0) and then by Cattaraugus County (26.9). According to Cancer Control P.L.A.N.E.T., these three counties are among the top ten for mortality in the state.



Source: Cancer Control PLANET, accessed March 8, 2011

Of the counties in red, two stand out also based upon the percent of women diagnosed with breast cancer at a late stage. African American women in the service area have an overall low rate of early stage at diagnosis, most notably in Erie County, where there is almost a twenty point difference in early stage diagnosis.

Cattaraugus County has a 49.68% rate of white women staged early which lags sharply behind the rates in WNY (60.71%), New York State (65%) and the United States (62.2%) (New York Cancer Registry, 2010).

The City of Buffalo was identified by the US Census Bureau as the third poorest city in the United States, behind Detroit and Cleveland (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). Extreme poverty exists throughout the Southern Tier counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua. These areas are technically classified as 'Appalachian'. While much more rural than the City of Buffalo, there are portions of these counties with similar poverty rates.

Due to the high mortality rates, the low number of women detected at an early stage, and the overall poverty in these areas Cattaraugus County and the City of Buffalo in Erie County have been selected as the target areas for this report.

## Health Systems Analysis

The analysis of the counties of Western New York health system is a vital component of the Community Profile needs assessment process in identifying the local issues affecting a women's transition through the continuum of care. The continuum of care begins with screening, diagnosis, treatment and follow-up care. Much of this analysis focuses on screening and barriers to access - major issues for women of poverty which comprise a large portion of the population of Western New York.

In order to conduct an in depth review of each area, fourteen key informants were interviewed. A complete list of current partners, grantees and services was compiled in addition to potential resources and additional points of contact.

In the City of Buffalo, there are already several partners conducting outreach to encourage breast cancer screening. The Affiliate has funded many small grants and community grant programs to this end in past years.

Based upon mapping resources, most services in the City of Buffalo are accessible to women via mass transit. However, not all locations for care are culturally sensitive or provide hours that are convenient to working women.

In Cattaraugus County, the New York State Cancer Services Program (CSP) conducts outreach to uninsured/underinsured women. In 2010, the Affiliate made the first community grant outside of CSP. This grant was to Southern Tier Health Care ("STHC") in Cattaraugus County. This grantee is making a push to increase screening referrals in primary care offices. Clearly, there is a need to increase outreach and education efforts in this community.

In Cattaraugus County, most of the services related to breast cancer throughout the continuum of care are based in Olean, the largest city in the county. While this is an "in need" community, 77% in the county reside outside of Olean and there is no means of mass transit (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Some Cattaraugus County communities are more than an hour by car to Olean.

Due to transportation gaps, access to care is a serious problem in Cattaraugus County. To date, all efforts to identify a cost effective, manageable solution have been unsuccessful.

In the past year, the Affiliate has been approached by several health systems and agencies interested in collaborating on a form of mobile mammography.

## **Qualitative Data Overview**

The Affiliate commissioned a survey of WNY women to identify breast health needs in the community. In addition, three focus groups were held in the target areas to obtain greater community perspective.

Most women are screened for breast cancer routinely, and few women believe that mammograms increase the risk for developing cancer, verifying that the test itself is not a barrier to screening. However, confusion exists with regard to recommendations for screening issued by the United States Preventative Services Task Force; there is a need for clarification of the guidelines on the part of health promotion organizations.

There is a general lack of awareness in the service area about specific and important breast health issues related to risk and screening. Expanded education about risk, screening guidelines and available resources is needed. It is vitally important that the CSP and their offerings be communicated to communities in need. Women, particularly African Americans, need to understand that breast cancer is not a death sentence. To this end, messages from survivors will play an important and impactful role.

## **Conclusions:**

As a result of the extensive research and review of the 8 counties in our Western New York service area and the constituent view on breast health and the risks associated with breast cancer, it is quite clear that there is a pervasive lack of awareness of this issue. In light of our findings in this report, the City of Buffalo and the communities of Cattaraugus County have been chosen as the highest priority areas for the Western New York Affiliate. The level of socio-economic status, geographic distribution, educational background and racial and ethnic background are all major factors in the level of awareness that we found among various women. The Affiliate needs to broaden its reach into the service area to fill these education gaps on the most basic level.

After carefully analyzing the data in demographics, statistics in mammography, early stage diagnosis, mortality, current health systems, qualitative data, the continuum of care and other information sources the most compelling issues for the Affiliate to address were revealed. The greatest needs and highest priorities are removing barriers to access of screening, education and regular screening for African American women in the City of Buffalo and the women of Cattaraugus County. We will fund the most effective and impactful programs to reduce late stage diagnosis in both of the above mentioned areas in our quest to save lives through early detection of breast cancer.

## **Acknowledgements**

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