

Physicians Launch Cancer Screening Project

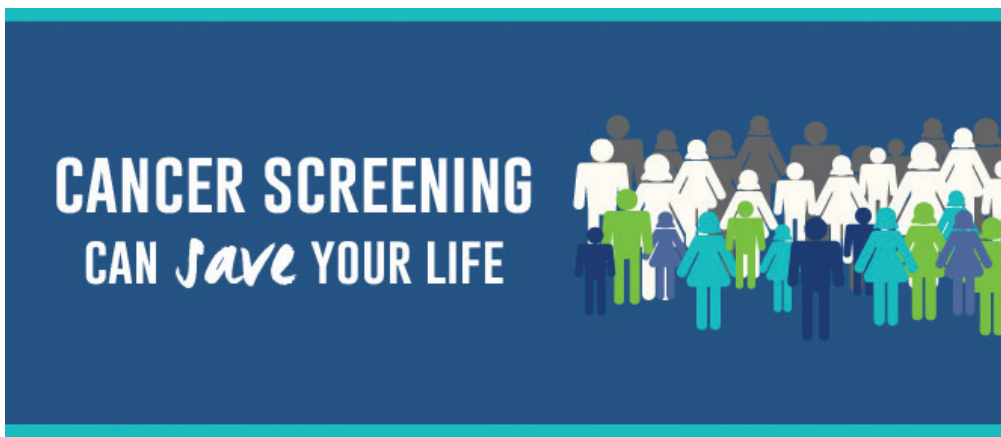
Initiative a Collaborative Effort

In March, Partnership for a Healthy Lincoln and the Lancaster County Medical Society announced the launch of the Nebraska Physicians Cancer Screening Initiative, a cancer screening initiative which will work to save lives through early detection of breast and colon cancer.

The project aims to bring additional public awareness to Lancaster County residents of the importance of cancer screening. This project is in alignment with the American Cancer Society and University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Public Health target of increasing the number of Nebraskans who are adequately screened for these cancers to “80% by 2018”. While the project began as a Lancaster County initiative, other communities have expressed interest and two other Nebraska cities will now also be participating in the project.

Lincoln physicians, Bob Rauner, Mike Rapp, and Brandon Webb have been developing the initiative over the last six months. Through their efforts, more than 26 primary care clinics representing more than 170 primary care providers have already joined the effort including physician members of The Physician Network, OneHealth Nebraska, SERPA ACO, Bryan Health Connect, the Lincoln Family Medicine Program, and People’s Health Center.

Participating primary care clinics will encourage and promote screening among their patients through outreach and in office consultation. Clinics will launch systematic efforts within their clinics such as using every visit to verify cancer screening status or reaching out to patients who haven’t been seen in a year or more to remind them of the need for screening. Taking this proactive



approach, says Rauner, is expected to increase the numbers of people who get screened, and better the odds of catching cancer in its earlier, more treatable form.

Lancaster County Medical Society physicians were inspired to create this project in Lincoln because Nebraska has a higher number of colon cancer cases than other states, yet lags behind in screening. Says Dr. Rauner, “By aligning the majority of primary care clinics in Lincoln around this project, we hope to be the first community in Nebraska to reach the 80% by 2018 target.”

The project is being funded by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, the COPIC Foundation, the Nebraska Medical Association and CHI Health St. Elizabeth.

An added benefit of the initiative is that the educational portion is also certified for both CME credit and American Board of Medical Specialties Maintenance of Certification credit. From the hospital and local health department perspective, it also complements the Lincoln Lancaster County Community Health Improvement Plan which local hospitals use in their community health needs assessments.

Complementing the Initiative is a consumer oriented cancer screening education effort led by Lancaster Crusade Against Cancer. The local coalition is focusing on getting the message out about the importance of

cancer screening as well as an effort to provide access to free stool tests kits to screen for colon cancer at participating Lincoln pharmacies in the month of March. For more information, visit: www.lincoln.ne.gov, keyword: colon cancer.



Partnership for a Healthy Lincoln

Partnership for a Healthy Lincoln (PHL) is a local nonprofit dedicated to improving community health, wellness, and fitness. PHL works to improve wellness policies, conduct community health research, and collaborate with community partners to improve the health of Lincoln and Lancaster County. For more information visit www.healthylincoln.org