

House Republican Press Release

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REP. HOVEY TOURS STATE TO PROMOTE CERVICAL CANCER AWARENESS



On Wednesday, January 16, State Rep. DebraLee Hovey (R-Monroe, Newtown) participated in four press conferences at hospitals around the state encouraging women to be aware of what causes cervical cancer and to be screened regularly. Rep. Hovey, who has been instrumental in offering legislation to increase awareness and expand cervical cancer screening opportunities, joined Lieutenant Governor Michael Fedele at the press conferences, which included stops at hospitals in Bridgeport, New Haven, Farmington and Stamford.

State Department of Public Health (DPH) Commissioner Galvin and Deputy Commissioners along with hospital officials were also on hand at the press conferences to answer questions and discuss programs promoting awareness and prevention.

“There are 4,000 deaths from cervical cancer every year,” said Rep. Hovey. “There is no reason for any woman to die from this disease because we can now identify the virus that causes it. Annual screenings, along with the option of vaccinating adolescent women so they never have to worry about cervical cancer, can eradicate this devastating disease. It’s very, very important for the State of Connecticut to promote awareness.”

According to DPH, there were an estimated 11,150 new cases of cervical cancer in 2007 in the United States. Cervical cancer once was the leading cause of cancer death for women in the United States. However, during the past four decades, incidence and mortality (the number of deaths each year) from cervical cancer have declined significantly, primarily because of the widespread use of the Papanicolaou (Pap) test to detect cervical abnormalities.

Cervical cancer can usually be prevented if precancerous cervical lesions are found through Pap tests and treated. About half of the women in the United States who develop cervical cancer have never had a Pap test. Regular Pap tests decrease a woman's risk for developing cervical cancer because they can detect precancerous cervical lesions at early, treatable stages. Cervical cancer screening should begin approximately three years after a woman begins having sexual intercourse, but no later than at 21 years old.

Cervical cancer screenings are available at no charge through the Department’s Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program for eligible women. For more information

on the program, please visit the DPH website at www.ct.gov/dph and select “Breast and Cervical Cancer” under “Featured Links” or call the Department of Public Health at (860) 509-7804.