

The 7th Conference on Health Care of the Chinese in North America

Breast Cancer Screening Results for a Large Chinese Community

Pauline G. Hecht, MD, FACS, Department of Surgery, New York Downtown Hospital, New York, NY



Abstract

In December 1993, New York Downtown Hospital presented a breast cancer educational and detection program for the Chinese community of New York. Interest for the program was stimulated by a Professional Educational Grant from the American Cancer Society - New York City Division. Local support for the event was extended by the New York City Hall Lions Club, which provided a large number of volunteers, translators and aids who assisted the essentially Chinese-speaking participants during the program. Voluntary assistance was donated by seven physicians and two nurses, who worked in clinical screening and educational capacities. Response to our outreach effort resulted in 125 Chinese women presenting for the Education and Detection program.

The significant finding, after reviewing the statistical analysis of our program, was the large number of women who were found to have abnormalities (36%). The number of abnormalities is far greater than found in other breast screening program (e.g., Guttman Clinic) and may be explained by the fact that the majority of the population we screened do not have physicians of their own and do not have medical care readily available to them. Many have never seen a physician. They are mostly indigent, foreign speaking and culturally segregated from the mainstream of American medical benefits.

The enormous response to our program as well as the immense need for medical services, as was disclosed in our screening results, have encouraged the Hospital to undertake even another program dedicated to the cancer cause. A new clinic for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Diseases of the Breast will debut in May, 1994 at New York Downtown Hospital.