Screening Saves Lives.

“Consider the whole person, not just her disability.”
- COMMENTS FROM A MAMMOGRAPHER

BREAST CANCER & DISABILITY

One in five (1:5) women in the U.S. and in Florida live with at least one disability.

Women with disabilities have been historically marginalized and experience disadvantages, particularly regarding access to health care.

Many women living with physical disabilities are significantly less likely to have been screened for breast cancer as recommended. Lower or less-consistent screening puts these women at risk for late-stage diagnosis and poor health outcomes.

Women with disabilities have an equal or greater chance of having breast cancer.

Some of the factors that contribute to successful breast health screenings for women with disabilities include:

- Disability accessibility of the medical facility (automatic front door, wide interior doors, low reception counters, large exam and dressing rooms, accessible bathrooms, waiting areas with room for wheelchairs, etc.)
- Designated disability parking area (van and auto) near the front entrance
- Adaptability of medical equipment (wheelchair-friendly mammography machines, mammography chair, adjustable height exam table, etc.)
- Disability training for medical providers
- Medical insurance
- Transportation

SCREENING & FACILITY TIPS

Information from Florida radiology professionals and Breast Health Access for Women with Disabilities (BHAWD)

Preparation
Schedulers can ask patients if they:
- need accommodations (extra time, assistance)
- use a wheelchair or scooter (if so, can the arms be removed or moved out of the way)
- are able to sit upright without back support
- are able to lift their arms to shoulder height
- are able to transfer to another chair on their own

“People First” Communication
- Speak directly to the patient, rather than to her companion, regardless of her disability.
- Use language such as:
  - woman with a disability (vs. disabled woman)
  - uses a wheelchair (vs. wheelchair-bound)

The Mammogram
- Consider asking another technologist to help with positioning.
- Adaptations or alternate views might be used to maximize tissue visualization.
- Work as a team with your patient to find the best positions.
- The patient is the expert in her abilities; Ask for directions and listen.
- Consider allowing your patients’ companion in the room during positioning.
- Use support aids: pillows, foam, towels, etc.

Medical Equipment
- When considering the purchase of new equipment, recommend vendors with wheelchair-friendly x-ray units, and a specialized mammography positioning chair.
### TRAINING & EDUCATION

**BHAWD (Breast Health Access for Women with Disabilities)**
"Mammography for Women with Disabilities: Training for the Mammography Technologist", A self-learning activity ASRT approved for 1 CE credit.
http://www.bhawd.org/  Tel. 510-204-4866

**North Carolina Office on Disability and Health**
(educational materials and training programs)
http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncodh/publications.cfm

**WITH ~ USS Photomap CE**
Nararrated slide shows made by women with disabilities about their breast health screening medical visits.
http://withuss.phhp.ufl.edu/photomapping.htm

**Mammacare**: A recognized standard for performing and teaching breast examination.
3 Certificate Courses offered
1-800-626-2273
http://www.mammacare.com

### ACCESSIBILITY & EQUIPMENT

**ADA Accessibility Guidelines**
http://www.access-board.gov/adaag/html/adaag.htm

**ADA Assessments and Tax Incentives**
http://www.ada.gov/taxpack.htm

For Centers for Independent Living (CILs) in Florida:

**SOME RECOMMENDATIONS:**
**Digital Mammography Machines**
- Siemens (Mammomat)  http://www.medical.siemens.com
- GE (Senographe) http://www.gehealthcare.com

**Adjustable Medical Chair**
- Hausted Mammography/Biopsy Chair
- Winco Transfer Cliner  http://www.med-electronics.com

**Adjustable Exam Tables**
- Brewer Access High-Low Power Exam Table:
  http://www.medical-supplies-equipment-company.com
  http://www.med-electronics.com