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MEDCHI REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO BREAST CANCER AWARENESS, EARLY DETECTION, AND ACCESS TO CARE

BALTIMORE, October 30, 2026 — As Breast Cancer Awareness Month comes to a close, MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, reaffirms its commitment to advancing breast cancer awareness, with a focus on early detection, and supporting policies that improve access to screening, services, and treatment for Marylanders.

For decades, MedChi has supported legislative efforts to strengthen Maryland's response to breast cancer through research funding, education, expanded screening access, and protections against financial barriers to necessary care.

MedChi has advocated for legislation addressing breast cancer research and prevention, as well as improving insurance coverage for breast cancer screenings, diagnostic examinations, supplemental imaging, and biopsies. MedChi has also worked alongside physician and public health partners to advance policies that promote early detection and address disparities in cancer screening and care.

Dr. James Williams, MedChi's 179th President, states "MedChi is committed to advocating for policies that help Marylanders access the screenings and diagnostic services they need, reduce unnecessary financial barriers, and ensure that public education and outreach make it to communities experiencing disparities in care."

In 2017, MedChi supported legislation to require notification regarding dense breast tissue at mammography centers. In 2023, MedChi joined other medical and public health organizations in supporting legislation focused on cancer screening, outreach, education, health disparities, and reducing cost-sharing for diagnostic and supplemental breast cancer examinations and biopsies.

In 2024, MedChi continued this advocacy by supporting legislation to strengthen insurance coverage requirements for breast and lung cancer screening and expand eligibility and public awareness efforts through Maryland's Breast Cancer Program. MedChi also supported expanding the scope of a statewide cancer prevention education campaign to include colon cancer.

"Breast cancer awareness needs to be a focus beyond a single month. Early detection, timely diagnostic follow-up, and access to appropriate care can make an important difference in patients' lives," says Williams. "Too many women have breast cancer diagnosed at a late stage with their outcomes being less optimal. It is essential that women perform self breast exams, know their family history, and have mammograms and routine evaluations by their physicians for the best outcomes."

Physicians play an essential role in educating patients about recommended screenings, discussing individual risk factors, and helping patients navigate the next steps when additional testing is needed. Access to appropriate screening and timely follow-up is particularly important for patients who face financial, geographic, or other barriers to care.

As the month concludes, MedChi asks Marylanders to speak with their healthcare professionals about breast cancer screening recommendations, personal and family medical histories, and any breast changes or concerns. Screening recommendations may vary based on age, individual risk, and medical history, making conversations with a healthcare professional an important part of informed preventive care.

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. Formed in 1799, it is still the largest physician organization in Maryland today. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients, and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit www.medchi.org.