



U.S. Representative • 9TH CD, New York • Brooklyn-Queens

ANTHONY D. WEINER

Report

Access to Mammography At Risk: Fewer Test Sites, Longer Waits

**Prepared by:
The Office of Congressman Anthony D. Weiner**

July 18, 2007

1 in 8 women in the United States will develop breast cancer in their lifetime.

The American Cancer Society recommends that women 40 and older have a mammogram every year. Early detection through mammograms can give women hope by significantly increasing their chance of survival from breast cancer. Over the last 7 years, due to better technology, the number of breast cancer cases that have been diagnosed has increased by 20%. However, the percentage of women receiving mammograms has been on the decline since 2000.

The root of this decline has been the alarming rate at which mammogram facilities are closing down. Among the reasons for these closures is the fact that mammography is not a lucrative business. Due to high overhead, inflation and rising medical costs, and the low rate paid by Medicare, offering mammograms can actually result in a net loss for the facilities that provide them.

Medicare reimbursement rates for mammograms are well below the actual cost of performing the mammogram, causing some facilities to lose money just for giving the procedure. Private insurers base their reimbursement rates on Medicare levels, making this a concern for everyone in need of mammograms.

New advancements in technology and treatment for breast cancer have given women a better chance than ever to win the survive breast cancer. However stagnation as a result of closures and wait times has hindered these achievements. The time has come to reverse this trend.

Mammography is Effective, Yet Underutilized

Early detection through mammograms is a woman's best chance against breast cancer. In fact, mammograms have been shown to decrease the chance of dying from breast cancer by

20-35%. Due to advancements in technology the detection rate for breast cancer has increased tremendously, yet women who receive mammograms nationally has fallen an alarming 4% from 2000-2005. This trend is also true in New York, where the percentage of women receiving mammograms fell by 4% between 2000-2004.

1). Breast Cancer Detections:

Nationally: 20% Increase (2001-2007)

2001: 200,000

2006: 213,000

2007: 240,510

2). Women 40 and Over Receiving Mammograms:

Nationally:

2000: 70%

2005: 66%

NYS:

2000: 80.6 %

2002: 79.3%

2004: 75.5%

3). Women 50-65 Receiving Mammograms:

Nationally:

2000-2005: 6.8% drop (worst drop of any age group)

Between ages 50-65 mammography is most effective for women and reduces mortality 20-35%. Yet this age group experienced the most significant percentage drop in testing.

Sources: ACS

Cancer, May 14th 2007, (Journal of the American Cancer Society)

National Breast Cancer Coalition

As Mammogram Facilities Close, Wait Times Rise

From 2000-2006 mammogram facilities closed at a rate of 12% nationwide. New York City was hit especially hard as mammogram facilities closed at a rate of 26% from 1999-2007; more than two times the national rate. As these facilities close, women are being forced to wait extremely long periods of time for mammograms and are often discouraged enough to bypass them altogether. The wait has gotten especially bad in urban areas, with New York City experiencing a 171% increase in wait time over the last ten years.

1). Number of Mammogram Facilities:

Nationwide: 12% Drop (1999-2006)

1999: 10,079
2000: 9933
2001: 9558
2002: 9306
2003: 9114
2004: 9011
2005: 8881
2006: 8832

New York State: 17% Drop (2000-2007)

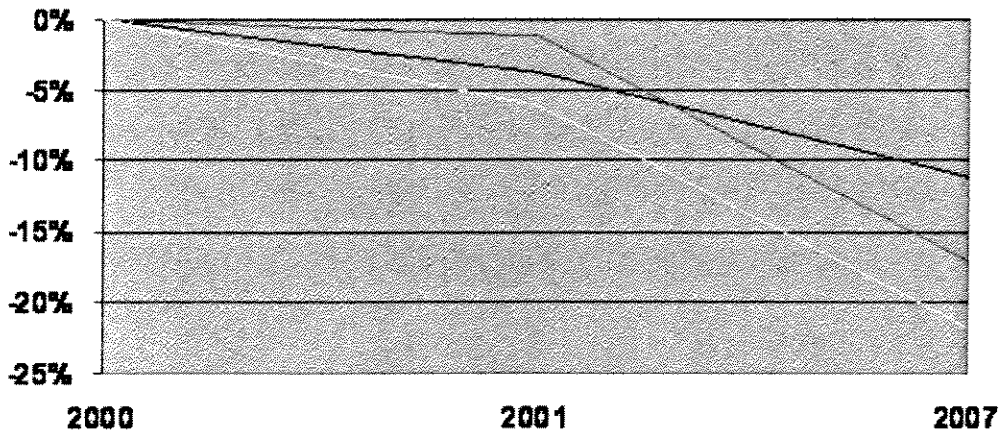
2000: 709
2001: 701
2004: 631
2005: 619
2007: 588

New York City: 26% Drop (1999-2007)

1999: 261
2000: 248
2001: 233
2007: 194

Mammography Facility Closings

Almost 25% fewer in NYC since 2000



— Nationwide Facilities
— NYS Facilities
— NYC Facilities

2). Wait Times:

Nationally:

2000: 1-4 Weeks

2005: 1-8 Weeks

New York City: Increase 171%

1998: 14 Days

2007: 38 Days

Sources: *U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)*

American College of Radiology

Cancer, May 14th 2007

United States Dept. of Health and Human Services

American College of Physicians

A Random Sample of New York City Clinics and Hospitals that Offer Mammograms and their Wait Times for Appointments

Anthony Weiner's office performed its own survey of wait times within the five boroughs of New York.

Bronx:

Weiler Hospital: Radiology Dept.	2 Weeks
Bronx Lebanon Hospital Center: Dept. of Radiology	24 Weeks
University Diagnostic Imaging	2 Weeks
North Central Bronx Hospital	2 Weeks
Montefiore Medical Park Department of Radiology	10 Weeks
Borough Average: 8 Weeks	

Brooklyn:

Professional Radiology Services, P.C.	20 Weeks
Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Services	6 Weeks
Wyckoff Heights Medical Center	10 Weeks
Interfaith Medical Center	2 Weeks
Doshi Diagnostic Imaging	2 Weeks
Borough Average: 8 Weeks	

Queens:

St. Johns Queens Hospital	2 Weeks
Queens Hospital Center	2 Weeks
Advanced Radiological Imaging Assoc. PC	4 Weeks
The Parkway Hospital	2 Weeks
Mt. Sinai Hospital of Queens	1 Week
Borough Average: 2.2 Weeks	

Manhattan:

Beth Israel Medical Center	3 ½ Weeks
West Side Radiology Associates, P.C.	4 ½ Weeks
Cornell Medical Imaging	12 Weeks
Breast Examination of Harlem	4 Weeks
Manhattan Diagnostic Radiology	2 ½ Weeks

Borough Average: 5.3 Weeks

Staten Island:

Staten Island University Hospital	10 Weeks
Richmond Radiology	1 Week
Staten Island Medical Group (Annandale Center)	1 Week
Regional Radiology	3 Weeks
Staten Island Medical Group (Clove Road)	2 Weeks

Borough Average: 3.4 Weeks

Overall Average Wait Time of Survey: 5.4 Weeks

Mammography is Expensive and Medicare Does Not Pay Enough

Due to inflation and rising medical costs, the cost of mammograms has grown faster than Medicare reimbursement.

1). Average Cost of a Mammogram:

Nationwide: 25% Increase (2002-2007)

2002: \$103

2007: \$125

2). Medicare Reimbursement:

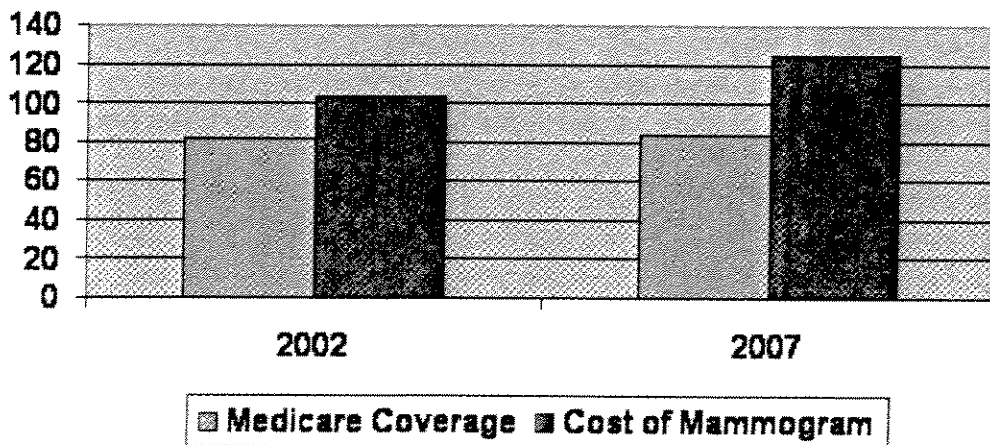
Nationwide: Flat (2002-2007)

2002: \$81.81

2005: \$82.86

2007: \$83.69

Average Medicare Reimbursement



Sources: *American Association for Women Radiologists*
Minnesota Department of Health
GE Health

Solution to the Mammogram Problem

This year over 240,500 new breast cancer cases will be detected in women across the nation. Mammography has proven to be an effective means in detecting these cases early and in decreasing the risk of fatality, and can be especially effective in New York given our state has the second highest rate of breast cancer in the country.

To combat the disturbing trend of mammogram facility closings and long wait times, Congressman Weiner will introduce legislation this week to increase Medicare reimbursement payment for mammogram coverage. Because private plans use these reimbursement rates as a baseline for their negotiations with employers, increased Medicare reimbursement has an impact throughout the insurance market.

This increased reimbursement rate is long overdue in order to make sure that practitioners no longer lose money performing mammograms and stay in the field to maintain an adequate workforce supply that can screen patients.

Congressman Anthony D. Weiner

Reports List