

PHILADELPHIA, PA

NEW STUDY SHINES LIGHT ON RACIAL DISPARITY OF BREAST CANCER

Philly's Black Women More Likely To Die From The Disease

While breast cancer screening is readily available within the Philadelphia metropolitan area, Black women aren't reaping the benefits of it. A new in-depth study from Susan G. Komen suggests Black women experience poorer quality of care and more barriers to diagnosis than their white counterparts and suffer higher mortality rates because of it.

Many survivors characterized the care they received as inefficient, inaccessible and lacking empathy. Instances of racism, microaggressions and healthcare discrimination cause widespread distrust in the healthcare system and a cultural shame of illness creates fear and denial.

Economic vulnerability and the lack of awareness of free services may also be a factor. The weight of a breast cancer diagnosis is significant, and community members noted it can mean the difference between someone seeking treatment immediately or delaying.

"As a kid, you never mentioned cancer. When people died in the family, you didn't know what they died of, because it was hushed. If a person had it, you weren't allowed to touch them either, because you'll catch it."

- Survivor

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Philadelphia and Camden (New Jersey) Counties face the largest disparities in breast cancer mortality rates for Black women.
- While free screening programs exist, Black women do not know where to access them.
- Community members experience poor-quality care and barriers at the diagnosis stage of the breast cancer continuum of care.

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