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சுவசிரிபாய  
SUWASIRIPAYA

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சுகாதாரம் மற்றும் சுதேசவைத்திய அமைச்சு  
**Ministry of Health & Indigenous Medicine**

All Provincial Directors of Health Services,  
All Regional Directors of Health Services,  
All Heads of Institutions,  
All Medical Officers of Maternal and Child Health,  
All Medical Officers of Health

**Commemoration Activities of World Cancer Day -2015 / February 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Theme - Not Beyond Us**

**Ensuring the availability of and access to early detection programmes for cancer can significantly reduce the cancer burden in a country.**

As you are aware, breast cancer is the most prevalent neoplasm amongst the Sri Lankan females, which accounts to 25% of all cancers in females. It has been estimated that, every year about 1000 – 1200 women die of breast cancer in our country. Even though it is the commonest cancer, it has a very good prognosis, if detected in early stages. Hence, detecting breast cancer at an early stage would result in not only in prolonged survival, but also has a higher chance of cure.

Cervical cancer is the second commonest cancer among females in Sri Lanka and according to estimates about 800 women die of the disease annually in Sri Lanka.

Well Woman Clinic Programme, which is being conducted by MOOH and staff in the field and the MOO and staff in the health institutions, was initiated in 1996.

Clinical breast examination, creation of awareness and skills among clients on self-breast examination, detection and identification of pre-cancerous lesions of cervical carcinoma are vital functions of the Well Woman Clinic Programme.

Since 2007, women of 35 years have been identified as the target age group for the Well Woman Clinic (WWC) programme.

According to public health norms, any public health programme should have at least 80% coverage to yield results and to be successful. As such, for the incidence of the above cancers to be reduced 80% coverage of the target age group should be achieved at national level and maintained for a few years.

As our national coverage for year 2013 was 34%, we need to focus more attention to improve coverage of the target group (The year 2013 coverage at district level is attached herewith for your information and for comparison).

Therefore, it was decided to commemorate the 'World Cancer Day' to declare a month of intensive involvement in Well Woman Clinic programme, so as to increase the attendance (coverage) of the women to the Well Woman Clinics which enables increased screening of women for the above cancers.

**Hence, the month of February is announced as the WWC Programme month, and the following activities have to be carried out in order to improve the screening.**

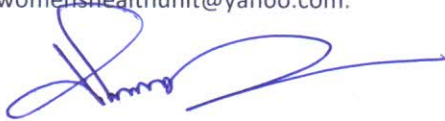
- Awareness programmes for males/ females/ couples/ families on the importance of attending WWC.
- Encourage PHMM to concentrate more on targeting home visits for women at 35 so as to motivate them to attend the WWCs.
- Utilize all health education sessions during the month in clinics, in schools... etc to create awareness regarding the magnitude of the above 2 cancers and the importance of screening.
- Enhance the knowledge and skills of the health staff to provide better screening services.
- Enhance the attitudes of the health staff to consider WWCs also as an important responsibility, such as the maternal and child health and encourage them to mobilise women to the WWCs.
- To mobilise more women to the WWCs during this period and also to conduct more WWCs during the period which would enable the MOH area/ District to increase the coverage of the target group
- To conduct mobile WWCs where necessary to increase the accessibility of women for the services.
- Enhanced monitoring, evaluation and feed back of the coverage of their particular area to the staff (PHM area/ MOH area) so as to motivate them and improve the coverage.

Please be kind enough to circulate this information to all the health institutions under your care in your district/province.

**Your leadership, guidance, and active involvement in the above activities is highly appreciated and valued.**

Also, please instruct the MO/MCH to send us a report on the activities conducted during this period and the progress achieved.

If you need any further clarification or information with regard to the above please contact –  
Dr. N. Mapitigama, National Programme Manager on Gender and Women's Health on – 0112692744 or on email [womenshealthunit@yahoo.com](mailto:womenshealthunit@yahoo.com).



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Director/Health Education Bureau  
Director/ National Institute of Health Sciences  
Director/National Cancer Control Programme  
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