December 27, 2023
For Immediate Release

January is Cervical Health Awareness Month
HDNW can help with screenings, vaccines

The Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance and Health Department of Northwest Michigan (HDNW) are joining the nation in observing January as Cervical Health Awareness Month. The observance is a time to raise awareness about cervical cancer, Human Papillomavirus (HPV) disease, and the importance of getting screened.

- Cervical cancer is nearly 100% preventable with recommended vaccinations and routine screenings.
- HPV is a known cause of cervical cancer, as well as some anal cancer, throat cancer, and genital warts.
- HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection (STI), with 85% of people getting an HPV infection in their lifetime.

With the availability of the HPV vaccine, people can protect themselves against the virus that causes more than 90% of cervical cancers. An HPV test can also detect the presence of this virus before cancer develops. By regular screening with a Pap test (alone or in conjunction with an HPV test), your doctor can detect precancerous conditions in the cervix, or detect cancer in the early stages. When cervical cancer is found early, it is highly treatable and associated with long survival and good quality of life.

“Medicine has given us incredible life-saving tools in the form of highly accurate screening tests and safe, effective vaccines,” says Jordan Wyeth, HDNW Nurse Practitioner. “We have the means to prevent cervical cancer.”

The vaccine is recommended for individuals 9 to 26 years old. If your teen has not received the vaccine, talk to their doctor about getting it as soon as possible. When given as recommended and before exposure to this common virus, it is highly effective.

Help With Costs, Insurance
Most health insurances cover the HPV vaccine, including Medicaid and the Healthy Michigan plan. If you or your child do not have insurance that covers vaccines, contact HDNW for low-cost options.

HD8W cab also connect women to breast and cervical cancer screenings through the Michigan Breast and Cervical Cancer Control and Navigation Program (BC3NP). If you need cervical cancer screening or have an abnormal mammogram or Pap test and your insurance does not completely pay for follow-up tests, call us locally at 800-432-4121 to see if you qualify for help.

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MEDIA REQUESTS:
Janenne Irene Pung, PIO
231-547-7653
media@nwhealth.org