



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

NICK LYON
DIRECTOR

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CONTACT: Jennifer Smith
(517) 241-2112

What women should know about the Michigan Breast Density Notification Law
Primary care provider education modules available

LANSING, Mich. – Earlier this summer, the [Michigan Breast Density Notification Law](#) went into effect as a result of Public Act 517 of 2014. Because of the law, all women who undergo mammography in Michigan will receive a letter from the facility where they received their mammogram describing their breast density and mammogram results in order to raise awareness of breast cancer risks.

While mammograms remain the gold standard for detecting breast tumors, they're less reliable in women with dense breast tissue. Dense or fibrous tissue shows up as splotches of white on a mammogram, as do tumors.

Breast density is reported in a way that ensures consistency and ranges from least dense - almost entirely fatty, to extremely dense, which is considered the most thick with very little fat. Greater density on a mammogram makes it more difficult to detect a breast cancer due to cancer being potentially masked by dense breast tissue. The expanse of dense white tissue is more likely to obscure cancer than a fatty, less dense background.

In addition to raising awareness, the law also urges patients to discuss their mammogram results with their primary care provider. This is to decide if supplemental imaging, in addition to the mammogram, should be considered based on their individual risk.

To assist with these discussions, an online education resource has been created for physicians by the University of Michigan Health System in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. It is designed to improve understanding of the Michigan Breast Density Notification Law and how it can be used to help Michigan residents.

The new website and educational resources will help primary care physicians become familiar with the law as well as the [screening guidelines for the early detection of breast cancer](#). There are six continuing education modules in which physicians have the opportunity to receive continuing medical education credit. The modules will cover: additional information about breast density; breast cancer screening guidelines; risk assessment and patient counseling; supplemental screening; educational materials; and online resources for providers.

For more information about the Michigan Breast Density Notification Law and to view the online educational resources, visit www.MIdensebreasts.org.

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