UK RCPC Community
Calendar of Events:

April:
4th – Hog Roast, Hazard Community College (Hazard Campus)
11th – Hog Roast, Hazard Community College (Jackson Campus)

May:
20th – Women Army of Volunteers Training at Hazard Community Action Center
20th – Leslie County and Lee County Relay for Life

June:
3rd – Breathitt County Relay for Life
10th – Wolfe County Relay for Life

Regarding HPV vaccinations, you can always contact your local health department or you can visit us at Wal-Mart:
- First Wednesday of the month at Whitesburg Wal-Mart
- First Thursday of the month at Jackson Wal-Mart
- First Friday of the month at Hazard Wal-Mart

Check our website link for an updated calendar:
http://www.mc.uky.edu/publichealth/ruralcancerpreventioncenter.html

RCPC Community Advisory Board
Tonya Godsey – UK Center for Excellence in Rural Health, Hazard
Lauren Bates – HCTC Nursing
Chas Gayheart – Kentucky Cancer Program
Darlene Cornett – Knott County Cancer Coalition
Sherry Payne – American Cancer Society
Vivian Smith – Lee County Health Dept
Ruby Campbell – Leslie County Health Dept
Ginger Brown – Letcher County Health Dept
Katie Dollarhide – Faith Moves Mountains
Deana McIntosh – Owsley County Health Dept
Candace Combs – Mountain Community Hospice
John Paul Amis – Perry County Board of Education
Carrie Hall– UK North Fork Valley Community Health Center
Renee Neace – Perry County Health Department
Andrea Oliver– Wolfe County Cancer Coalition

We are happy these individuals have volunteered their time to help us with our community service and research activities.

Mission – The Rural Cancer Prevention Center (RCPC) is a planned collaboration of community members, public health professionals, and researchers designed to reduce the health disparities associated with cervical cancer, breast cancer, and colorectal cancer among residents of the Kentucky River Health District.
Despite the poor national economy, there is good news in the mountains of southeastern Kentucky. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, GA has recognized our increased burden of cervical cancer and is committed to helping resolve this epidemic through funding for the Rural Cancer Prevention Center (RCPC). Starting this month, the RCPC will launch a full-scale program to promote Pap testing for all eligible women residing in the Kentucky River Area Development District (KRADD). The emphasis of this program is “find and help” meaning that we want to locate women who are three years or more overdue for a Pap test and then assist these women in every way possible to help them receive the exam. Our goal is to improve rates in Pap testing, therefore decreasing deaths from cervical cancer, a cancer that is preventable and treatable if caught in the early stages. Unfortunately, high rates of cervical cancer have existed for far too many years in the KRADD. With the help of our Community Advisory Board (CAB) the RCPC will be “reaching out” to local volunteers who are willing to assist us in reaching this goal.

As part of our new emphasis on Pap testing, the RCPC will offer the following services:
1) Our two full time nurses are willing to talk with any woman who is overdue for a Pap test – this can occur by phone, e-mail, or in person at one of our many community outreach events.
2) The RCPC will also assist anyone who would like help in the process of making an appointment for a Pap test.
3) The RCPC will also assist anyone who would like help in the process of understanding and navigating the insurance coverage and costs associated with Pap testing.
4) The RCPC will sponsor training opportunities for health care providers who want to update and expand their skills related to cervical cancer prevention and screening.
5) Because we understand that transportation to clinics that provide Pap testing may not be possible to obtain, our two full time nurses will help women with transportation when needed.
6) For women experiencing fear of going to a clinic for Pap testing, the RCPC will arrange for a “companion woman” – one of our nurses or local volunteers – to go with them to the clinic.
7) Finally, we will continue to provide the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine to young women and we hope to “enlist” many of those we vaccinate as potential local volunteers to “find and help” women who are overdue for Pap testing.

Throughout 2011 you will hear dozens of RCPC radio broadcasts and see numerous billboards, advertisements, and television spots about our Pap testing campaign. Our CAB members and our “army of volunteers” will make their presence known in the KRADD and their mission to “find and help” will be readily recognized as word spreads about our services and goal to increase Pap testing and decrease cervical cancer rates. If you are interested in volunteering to help us reduce the burden of cervical cancer in the mountains please contact Cissi Jones at (606) 233-9032 or Wallace Bates at (606) 568-6625. If you are a cervical cancer survivor and would like to help the RCPC by representing yourself as a survivor, please contact Sandy Good, toll-free, at 1-866-686-7272.
INSURANCE TO COVER HPV VACCINE IN KENTUCKY
By: Elisia Cohen

Beginning January 8, 2011 all new health insurance plans will cover vaccines that protect women from the Human Papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus that can cause cervical cancer. The new requirement is the result of the health care reform law passed by Congress last year and signed by President Obama. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the vaccine for women, ages 9 to 26, ideally before exposure to HPV through sexual activity.

“Vaccinating early at a young age is best” said Dr. Baretta Casey, a family medicine doctor and former director of UK’s Center for Excellence in Rural Health—Hazard. “It is just like having your child vaccinated for other diseases, the point of the vaccine is to protect you from the disease before you are exposed to it.”

Kentucky has the fifth highest rate of cervical cancer incidence among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The Appalachian area of Kentucky has one of the highest rates of cervical cancer in the country. “The cervical cancer incidence rate in Appalachian Kentucky is 33.3% higher than the rate for the U.S. But, the unusually high burden of cervical cancer in Kentucky and particularly in the Appalachian area of Kentucky can be erased if young girls are vaccinated and women 18 and older are screened” said Dr. Thomas Tucker, Director of the Kentucky Cancer Registry.

"The good news is that the HPV vaccine can prevent cervical cancer. The vaccine is given as a series of three shots over a period of six months. Having a Pap test performed at the appropriate times can detect cervical cancer early while it is completely curable. These two measures can save countless lives in Kentucky" said Dr. Casey, who is also the Principal Investigator for the Cervical Cancer-Free Kentucky Initiative.

For the vaccine to be effective, you must receive all three shots. Dr. Casey said of the series, “It is important to remember that it takes the complete series of vaccinations for the body to build up the needed protection, so you need to commit to that up front. Ask your doctor for the HPV vaccination now.”

MARCH IS COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH
By: Robin Vanderpool

Blue. For many, this color symbolizes University of Kentucky sports and the unique hue of spring grass in Kentucky. But just as important in the Commonwealth, the color blue also serves as a reminder of colorectal cancer. In March we celebrated Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, honoring colorectal cancer survivors and providing education on the importance of screening. According to the American Cancer Society, over 2,300 new cases of colorectal cancer are diagnosed in Kentucky each year and over 800 Kentuckians die from the disease annually. Unfortunately, Kentucky also has lower colorectal cancer screening rates compared to the rest of the country. Regular exercise, a healthy diet, not smoking, and routine screening with a colonoscopy can help prevent colorectal cancer. Additionally, colorectal cancer screening helps find cancer early when it’s easier to treat. So remember, March isn’t just about high school and college basketball…it’s also a time to focus on colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer is preventable, treatable, and beatable!

RCPC helps sponsor
2011 Farm and Home Night

On March 17, 2011, St. Patrick’s Day, we participated in the annual 4H Farm Day Expo in Wolfe County. We provided barbecue pork sandwiches as a sponsor of the event. The event drew 1,100+ people. Our staff manned a booth at the expo providing factsheets for colon, breast and cervical cancers, and spoke with many individuals about their personal cancer stories and made referrals for screenings and HPV vaccination.
Cervical cancer is still a major concern in Kentucky. One of the ways to prevent the disease and deaths from cervical cancer is to be screened at the appropriate times and to have follow-up care by physicians and other health care professionals. The Pap smear is a routine test used to detect changes in the cells of a woman’s cervix which could signify precancerous or cancerous lesions.

The detection of cervical cancer in its earliest stages increases survival rates. If the cancer is localized, 92% of women will have survived at 5 years after diagnosis. However, if advanced disease is present, only 13% will survive. If abnormal cells are found by screening with a Pap test, cervical cancer rates can be reduced approximately 60% after 3 years.

The purpose of a Pap test is to obtain a sample of cells from the area where the abnormal cells resulting from Human Papillomavirus (HPV) infection normally develop. Healthcare providers will usually collect the sample using soft, specially-shaped brushes. Another option is a newer liquid-based Pap test which is endorsed by some women’s health care organizations.

In the past, women’s health advocates encouraged women of reproductive age to receive an annual (yearly) “Well Woman” exam which included a Pap test. This was based on the recommendation that women who had been sexually active for three years or 18 years old (whichever came first) should have a yearly Pap test. New recommendations vary to some degree. U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) continues to recommend starting Pap testing within three years of initial sexual activity, but now recommends screening at least every three years instead of annually. New recommendations from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) specify that Pap testing should begin at age 21 regardless of the age that a young woman became sexually active. ACOG recommends Pap testing for women ages 21 – 30 every two years and women over age 30 who have had three negative (normal) screenings should have a Pap test every three years. Both sets of new recommendations indicate more frequent screening when abnormal results are received. The American Cancer Society (ACS) guidelines are the same as ACOG, except they recommend an annual Pap test if not using the newer liquid-based testing.

The new recommendations promote Pap testing for sexually active women after childbearing age. Again the frequency is less often (every 2-3 years unless abnormal results are found). All recommendations indicate stopping Pap testing for women over 65 who have had recent normal test results (negative for precancerous or cancerous cells - for ACOG this is defined as no abnormal test results in the past 10 years). However, routine pelvic exams should be continued. It is also important to note that Pap testing is not recommended for women of any age who have had a complete hysterectomy unless the surgery was performed as a treatment for precancerous cells or cancer, or the cervix was retained at the time of the hysterectomy, or a woman has increased cervical cancer risks.

In the U.S., the vast majority of cervical cancer is diagnosed in women who have never received a Pap test or who have not had a Pap test in the last five years. Other cases occur in women who have not received follow-up after having an abnormal Pap test. It is important for women to receive regular Pap testing as recommended and for due diligence on the part of the healthcare provider regarding follow-up on abnormal results.

In summary:

ACS Guidelines: Cervical cancer screening with a Pap test should begin 3 years of first sexual intercourse or at age 21, whichever comes first. Guidelines for successive screening are based on age, screening test, and previous test results.

USPSTF Recommendations: Strongly recommends screening with a Pap test in those who are sexually active and recommends against routine screening of women greater than age 65 or in women having a total hysterectomy due to benign disease.