

EASIER ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON BREAST CANCER IN TIMOK



Prof. Dr Sladjana Filipović at the lecture

BOR/ZAJECAR, Serbia – From time to time, dr Vesna Stankovic and medical nurse Minica Petrovic work together in Timok Region Municipalities. Breast cancer is very ‘common’ disease in this area with low income and dying industry. Access to information about breast cancer is limited. Trainings about breast self-examination (BSE) for medical professionals are rare. But, these ladies are determined to change the situation. They participated at USAID/CHF seminar about BSE which was conducted for medical professionals and community members. Dr Vesna went to the first and nurse Minica to the latter seminar. Seminars for Timok Region were held in last week of March 2004, on 25th in Zajecar and on 30th in Bor. Lecturers from the chair of Clinical Oncology at Medical Faculty, University of Nis promoted BSE for women in south-eastern Serbia.

“I am completely satisfied with this seminar. I heard lot of new facts”, said Minica. She also drew attention to the fact that women from communities of Timok region are generally uninformed. Surveys are showing that only 16% of malignant breast tumors in this region are currently detected in early stage.

“Breast cancer is probably not one of your main concerns. Most women do not think about this disease at all. However, all women are exposed to certain breast cancer risk” said a lecturer prof. dr Sladjana Filipovic, at Seminar opening. During prime-time term on radio and TV station “Zajecar”, during the afternoon, Biljana Glisic, a journalist and participant of RH/FP



Consultation - dr Stanković and nurse Petrović workshop for journalists, dedicated time to breast cancer issues.

Her guests were dr Lalosevic (Oncologist), dr Tadic (radiologist) and dr Djokovic (Surgeon). A fifteen-minute long footage on education was also shown.

“Seminar held in Bor for Bor district communities and health professionals is an obligation for all people thinking about health and with purpose of early disease detection and further treatment”, said dr Vesna. Minica continued, saying that she believes in “great importance of quality and timely information for everybody” and that the role of media and state policy is irreplaceable. She considers that the environment she lives and works in is a specific one. Media created an image that these are communities characterized by ecological disasters and which are becoming deserted. “Therefore, education which I attended instills hope that we are not forgotten. CHF is an organization thinking about future trough various aspects of community education”, concludes nurse Minica.

Prof. dr Sladjana Filipovic, lead lecturer of project is thrilled by this round of Seminars, although there are fifteen years of hard work with over 25,000 women in Nisava district behind her. Based on that experience she designed training of future volunteers for breast self-examination activities.

By supporting project “Breast self-examination”, USAID/CHF wishes to contribute to: increasing number of early breast cancer detection from 16% to 20% in next year. With coworkers such as dr Vesna and nurse Minica this goal does not seem unreachable. Both dr Vesna and nurse Minica immediately created plan for knowledge transfer sessions after BSE seminar.