

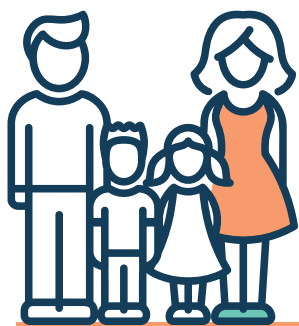
Engaging Women as Key Healthcare Decision-Makers

Healthy Women program supports society's chief medical officers

Women hold 80% of all healthcare decisions in their hands. They are proactive researchers, care advocates for their families, and social network super-users who place large amounts of trust in peer-to-peer networks and recommendations. Their influence in health care easily seats them as society's chief medical officers.

Despite having such power and leverage in selecting the doctors they and their loved ones see, women face challenges that can hinder their healthcare decisions. Busy schedules, a shortage of reliable information, and wariness of the healthcare industry are all obstacles that inhibit access to providers.

Kettering Health Network is making strides to remove barriers that prevent women from getting the health care they and their families need.



- Women make **80%** of all healthcare decisions
- **79%** ensure their family receives recommended health care
- **85%** choose their children's doctors
- **84%** take their children to appointments
- Women accounted for **57%** of all expenses incurred at doctors' offices in 2011

Source: Department of Labor; Aetna

Heather Pulaski, MD, gynecologic oncologist with Kettering Cancer Care, gave a presentation on HPV at one of the first Healthy Women events. "I think it is important to engage with our patients and the public in a non-clinical setting because we all have the same goal—better health," Dr. Pulaski says. "Events like this reinforce that we are all in this together. We are all in the patient role at some point in our lives and these events can break that barrier down for community members."

By reaching out to women through events like this, not only can we stimulate conversation in the community but it is also a great opportunity to network and build practices and reputations.

In addition to events, the Healthy Women program includes access to a monthly newsletter sent to program participants with informative health articles and inspiring patient testimonials, quarterly prize drawings, and an exclusive, members-only event. Local businesses are being invited to join as partners in the program to offer discounts on health products and services.

Shaping the sphere of influence

Making providers accessible to women through fun and educational outlets that can be attended by groups of friends fosters a positive environment where women are more likely to build trust with each other and with Kettering Health Network providers.

"I had several attendees approach me after the event to ask questions, and it is my hope that they went to their own gynecologist and asked about HPV testing and vaccination," Dr. Pulaski says. "By reaching out to women through events like

healthy women

MIND. BODY. SPIRIT.

OFFERING OPTIONS

We know health care is not a “one-size-fits-all” model. Women know that too, which is why we are continuously investing in innovations and new technologies to provide women with choices for their care and treatment. Recent additions include:

- **da Vinci Xi® Surgical System**, available at Kettering Medical Center, allows women to receive minimally invasive surgeries—hysterectomies to myomectomies—with faster recovery times and less scarring.
- **Cryopreservation** Kettering Reproductive Medicine offers cryopreservation to preserve eggs of women who are scheduled to undergo cancer treatment or wish to start a family later in life.
- **Nitrous Oxide** Soin Medical Center now offers labor and delivery patients nitrous oxide as an anesthesia option, and the service will soon be available at Kettering Medical Center.
- **Midwifery** Kettering Physician Network Advanced Women’s Healthcare added nurse midwives to its practice in 2017.

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Get involved

Healthy Women events enable providers to form relationships with community members, educate women on new treatment options, and even acquire new patients.

“It is so humbling that all of these women are coming out to hear us speak—and they genuinely want to learn,” Dr. Pulaski says. “It is also not that much work to present because you are talking about what you practice every day—it is second nature to have this kind of educational dialogue.

“Participating in events like these makes you feel more involved, helps deal with burnout, and gives you a sense of pride,” she says. Her positive experience motivated her to sign up to present at another Healthy Women event.

If you have a topic you believe would be beneficial for a women’s health event or an idea for an article, email physicianquarterly@ketteringhealth.org

Join Healthy Women to enjoy the perks!

Healthy Women is for all women who are motivated to live their best life. Visit ketteringhealth.org/womenshealth

