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### **Free Breast Screening Patient Navigator Program to Help Women Access Care**

Syracuse - Breast Care Partners, LLC (BCP), a nationally accredited breast center, is proud to announce Leesa Kelley has joined its program in the role of breast screening patient navigator. This new position is a key element of recent funding BCP received to expand services for underserved women, regardless of their insurance status, to navigate the healthcare system to complete breast cancer screenings. The National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) Patient Navigation Project is one of a number of programs that are part of New York State Governor Cuomo's [statewide initiative to increase breast cancer screening by 10% over the next five years](#).

For questions and concerns about scheduling mammograms, Kelley is directly available to women of all ages and medical providers by phone or text at 315/313-3160. Messages left are confidential.

The NAPBC Patient Navigation project began in October 2016 with the goals of: 1) increasing the number of women screened for breast cancer and 2) improving the quality of breast cancer screening and diagnostic follow up by enhancing existing patient navigation services. The project is being implemented with support from Health Research, Inc. and the New York State Department of Health.

"The breast screening patient navigator is available at no charge to women or medical providers to help: secure convenient screening appointments; navigate the system of securing insurance to cover screening costs; understand the process of receiving a screening mammogram to alleviate fears; secure transportation to appointments, and more." explains Janet Ricciardiello, RN, BCP program director. "We're making it easier for women to take advantage of this important cancer screening."

Ricciardiello added that the best protection against breast cancer is early detection and diagnosis. Annual mammograms can detect cancer early — when it is most treatable — often preventing the need for extensive treatment for advanced cancers and improving chances of breast conservation. According to the American College of Radiology, Mammography has helped reduce breast cancer mortality in the U.S. by nearly 40% since 1990. Breast cancer is the most common cancer and the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths among women in New York and Onondaga County.

Kelley joins Breast Care Partners with many years of local healthcare community relations and marketing experience. She most recently served as community health outreach manager for Crouse Hospital, where she worked to address healthcare needs of underserved and underinsured individuals in Onondaga County.

#### **About Breast Care Partners**

Formed in 2014, BCP is a diverse group of breast health specialists in Central New York, who have partnered together to ensure each patient the best possible breast care available. Members of the collaborative include Crouse Radiology Associates; St. Joseph's Imaging Associates; Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY; CNY Surgical Physicians; St. Joseph's Breast Care and Surgery; Crouse Health and St. Joseph's Health, all of which have come together to provide a seamless, multidisciplinary program of breast care services – from initial imaging/screening all the way through surgical intervention and post-procedure support, treatment and management of disease, psychosocial and nutritional support, rehabilitation and survivorship. BCP also is committed to overall breast healthcare and education in the community. In 2015, the program received three-year, full accreditation designation by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC), a program administered by the American College of Surgeons.

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