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MESSAGE FROM DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH DEPUTY DIRECTOR VIRGINIA M. PRESSLER MD, MBA

Aloha! I am pleased to be participating in this special women's health issue of the Hawaii Medical Journal.

As a surgeon for many years specializing in breast cancer, women's health is a primary concern to me. Women's health is enjoying unprecedented attention and we are beginning to see long overdue improvements. Yet, we still have a long way to go to fully appreciate and improve the entire spectrum of women's health issues. The articles in this issue of the Hawaii Medical Journal highlight just a few of the broad array of issues affecting women's health.

Why is women's health so important? In addition, to having their own unique health needs, women frequently respond differently than men to treatments for health problems which they share with men. Outcomes from medical research on men are not always applicable to women. Also, in spite of the expanding number of career women, women are still the predominant care givers in the family and make eighty percent of the health care decisions in families.

Preventive health has always been important to me. With my new role in the State Department of Health, I am even more aware of the power of preventive health in the overall public health of all of the people of Hawaii. Unhealthy habits and lifestyles account for the majority of health problems which all of you treat every day.

September is Women's Health Month. It is a time for women. It is also a time for physicians and the entire health care industry to recognize the unique health care needs of women and ensure that women have fair and equal access to top quality, affordable health care services. This includes attention to counseling our patients on healthy lifestyles. In spite of the increasing autonomy and empowerment of women, women still respect the advice of their physician. Let us accept the challenge.

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Editorial

**Norman Goldstein MD
Editor, Hawaii Medical Journal**

This month — Special Issues on Women's Health - Part II

Five years ago, Hawaii Medical Journal published the first Special Issue on Women's Health (September 1995).

This month, Deborah Goebert MS, writes a review on Male Violence Against Women in Hawaii. This is an appropriate follow-up to the papers by Shay Bintliff MD on Domestic Violence, Identifying Abuse (pages 246-247) and Domestic Violence: A Medical Perspective (pages 242-245) by Julie Owens, Executive Director of HOPE Domestic Violence Consultants.

The paper by Virginia Pressler MD and Lila Johnson RN present an excellent perspective on Women's Health - "A Real Lady Killer."

Finally, the manuscript by Valli Kanuhu PhD is not strictly limited just to women, but discusses the health needs of both lesbians and gay men in Hawaii.

Mahalo to the authors for these important additions to issues dealing with women's health.

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