



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Research Project for Breast Cancer Survivors Promotes Healthy Weight, Lifestyle**

An innovative, yearlong research project to determine whether a healthy weight and lifestyle can improve the quality of life for breast cancer survivors is underway at a Topeka, Kansas cancer center.

This project was launched through the efforts of [Stormont-Vail HealthCare](#), an integrated health care system in Topeka, funding and support from the [Midwest Cancer Alliance](#), and collaboration with three partners providing expertise and support to the project's participants.

The research project is three-pronged, with expertise coming from the partners: [New Directions Behavioral Health](#)<sup>®</sup> (New Directions), [Hy-Vee](#) and [Genesis Health Clubs](#). New Directions provides telephonic health coaching to promote and assist participants with healthy lifestyle changes. Hy-Vee provides nutritional counseling through a registered dietician. Genesis provides fitness training and an exercise venue.

"Although weight loss has been a positive outcome, a majority of the women have experienced less joint pain, more energy, increased awareness of healthy food choices and improved well-being," said Cindy Giessel, study coordinator for the Stormont-Vail Cancer Center.

Giessel also noted that having the support of the community partners has had an undeniable impact on the breast cancer survivors, and most say they wish the program would have been available at the time of their diagnosis.

"Participants are enthusiastic about the program," said Dottie Pfannenstiel, health coach for New Directions. "They look forward to the phone calls with the health coach, knowing they can share their struggles and successes as they work toward positive change."

"New Directions has added another layer of quality support for participants who are looking to change their lifestyle," said Jakica Tancabelic, M.D., Stormont-Vail's physician investigator. "We are excited about this study and pleased to be working with the partners we have."

The research project, which began in January 2015, can accommodate up to 80 participants. To date, 28 people have qualified for the study. Participants must be or have been patients of the Stormont-Vail Cancer Center with a breast cancer diagnosis and have a BMI of 25 or higher. Stormont-Vail will analyze the data and evaluate results when the project concludes at the end of the year.

For more information about the study or to set up interviews, please contact:  
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**About Stormont-Vail HealthCare**

Stormont-Vail HealthCare is an integrated health care system serving northeast Kansas. Stormont-Vail HealthCare was formed when Stormont-Vail Regional Health Center and Cotton-O'Neil Clinic joined in 1995. The health system has more than 200 primary care and specialty physicians working together to provide exceptional care throughout the region.

**About New Directions**

Founded in 1995, New Directions helps people live healthy, balanced lives. The fast-growing health care company provides managed behavioral health care services, employee assistance programs (EAPs), organizational consulting and health coaching to large regional health plans, Fortune 100 companies, employers and labor groups. For more information, visit [ndbh.com](http://ndbh.com).