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WOMEN LIVING LONGER THAN MEN

New Life Expectancy Data Shows Men Lagging Half a Decade Behind Women

*Groups Calls on Administration, HHS
to Support Creation of 'Office of Men's Health'*

WASHINGTON, March 14, 2003 – A Center for Disease Control (CDC) report released today cites good news in the reductions in health disparities among many of the nation's racial and ethnic groups, but at the same time reinforces a continued trend placing men at the bottom of health and well-being lists.

Men's Health Network (MHN), the country's leading men's health education and advocacy group is challenging the Bush Administration not to overlook men in their efforts to improve life-expectancy rates and is calling on the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to establish a federal "Office of Men's Health."

"The CDC data is bitter-sweet as the disparity between men and women of all racial and ethnic backgrounds continues to exist in terms of health and mortality," said Megan Smith, director of project development for MHN. "Now more than ever steps are needed to improve on these numbers. Establishing an 'Office of Men's Health' is the logical place to start."

According to the report, women's life expectancy rose from 79.7 to 79.8 years, while men rose from 74.3 to 74.4 years. White women have the highest life expectancy, 80.2 years, followed by black women (75.5 years), white men (75 years) and black men (68.6 years).

Support for the men's health movement continues to grow in communities throughout the country as well as on Capitol Hill.

"As the life expectancy gap between men and women continues to grow, it highlights the need for the creation of an office of men's health to raise awareness and promote education about the need for screening and prevention," said U.S. Representative Randy "Duke" Cunningham.

A July 2001 CDC report cites the rate of doctor visits for such reasons as annual examinations and preventive services was 100 percent higher for women than for men.

"We are now faced with an epidemic of under-diagnosed mental and physical ailments among men. Much like when heart disease was under-diagnosed in women, we are now

faced with another arguably broader gender condition. The general public may overlook them, but they should be easily recognized by the experts. Simply put, men need to proactively go to their doctors and get a check up," said New York City Psychiatrist and MHN Advisor Edward M. Stephens, M.D.

Men's Health Network is a non-profit educational organization comprised of physicians, researchers, public health workers, individuals and other health professionals. MHN is committed to improving the health and wellness of men through education campaigns, data collection and work with health care providers to provide better programs and funding on men's health needs. Additional questions or comments should be referred to info@menshealthnetwork.org , www.menshealthnetwork.org , or by calling (202) 543-6461 x 101.

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