

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Men's Health Network Applauds Latest Prostate Cancer Screening
Recommendation from the USPSTF**

Health Experts Still Advocate for Improved Rating for Older Men

WASHINGTON — Men's Health Network (MHN) commends the latest recommendation from the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF) that urges men to talk to their healthcare providers about when, or if, they need to be screened for prostate cancer using the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) screening test. While the improved recommendation will have a positive impact for men under 70, MHN continues to advocate for men of all age groups to speak to their healthcare provider about prostate cancer screenings. The USPSTF final recommendations are a "C" rating for men aged 55-69 and a "D" rating for men age 70 and above.

"We believe that the new recommendation will encourage men to take a more active role in their health and wellness," said Ana Fadich, Vice President of MHN and Chair of the American Public Health Associations Men's Health Caucus. "We are hopeful that the Task Force will be more inclusive of men age 70 and older in future recommendations. MHN believes there is a tremendous benefit for all men, regardless of age, in communicating with their healthcare providers about screenings."

The Task Force is a government supported panel composed of national medical experts whose recommendations influence healthcare providers and both public and private insurance coverage decisions. Preventive screenings rated "A" or "B" by the Task Force are covered by the Affordable Care Act.

The "C" recommendation means that "the USPSTF recommends selectively offering or providing this service to individual patients based on professional judgment and patient preferences." The group's latest draft recommendation is an improvement over the 2012 "D" rating that recommended against the use of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing for the early detection of prostate cancer.

MHN applauds the "C" rating for prostate cancer screening of men aged 55—69 but is concerned about the "D" rating for men aged 70 and above. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), on average, a 70 year old man can expect to live another 14.5 years. And, a "D" rating endangers Medicare coverage for those aging men in good health who have many years of productive life ahead of them. The Affordable Care Act gives the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services the authority to deny payment for any service that has a "D" rating from the USPSTF.

(more)

Fadich said that MHN applauds the Task Force for being inclusive of the medical and advocacy community for the latest recommendations. MHN believes that the Task Force's latest findings will encourage more men to talk to their healthcare providers about prostate cancer screening. MHN suggests that all men see their healthcare provider for a baseline PSA test at age 40.

"Like anything in healthcare, the more communications, the better. If men are starting a conversation with their physicians, they may realize they are at greater risk for prostate cancer than they thought," said Vivek Sinha, MD, an MHN advisor specializing in Family Medicine. "If more people are communicating and talking about preventative screenings, we may be able to save lives."

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men with approximately 165,000 new cases each year and over 29,000 deaths, according to the American Cancer Society. African-American men, men with a family history of the disease, and men exposed to Agent Orange and some other chemicals are at greater risk.

Still, medical experts believe there are benefits to screening men outside of those groups and over the age of 70.

Addressing men [age 70 and above](#), Salvatore Giorgianni, PharmD, Senior Science Advisor to MHN stated, "The approach to screening men in later years should be more closely aligned with current life expectancy and adjusted every two to three years to reflect male life expectancy "

With [Men's Health Month](#) (June) fast approaching, now is a good time for men to discuss prostate cancer and other health screenings with their healthcare providers. MHN's screening recommendations for men and for women can be found at www.GetItChecked.com

About Men's Health Network

[Men's Health Network](#) (MHN) is an international non-profit organization whose mission is to reach men, boys, and their families where they live, work, play, and pray with health awareness messages and tools, screening programs, educational materials, advocacy opportunities, and patient navigation. Learn more about MHN at www.menshealthnetwork.org and follow them on Twitter @MensHlthNetwork and Facebook at www.facebook.com/menshealthnetwork. For more information on MHN's ongoing Dialogue on Men's Health series, visit www.dialogueonmenshealth.com

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