

# Texas Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalition (TCCCC)

## Notes and Resources on Current Issues in Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Recommendations

### Background

On November 16, 2009, the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) announced that it would no longer recommend routine screening for women between the ages of 40 and 49. This change in USPSTF recommendations stirred significant public discussions and some controversy resulting in position statements from many national and Texas-based cancer advocacy organizations and cancer research treatment centers. The Texas Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalition (TCCCC) took action on the USPSTF recommendations by holding a webinar on December 2, 2009, to provide our members involved in breast cancer screening services and research with opportunity to explore the issues and develop a response. Many women are confused and concerned about the new screening recommendations and there is concern that such confusion may result in fewer screenings among at risk women. According to the Texas Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data, 28% of women who currently qualify (age 40 and over) are not being screened due to lack of access, insurance, education or awareness. Among Texas' Latino/Hispanic populations, these at-risk women over 40 who lack insurance and have not had a mammogram in the past 2 years, represent 33% of the population.

### TCCCC Discussion and Response

As a statewide coalition charged with implementing the Texas Cancer Plan in

coordination with the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas and the Texas Department of State Health Services, TCCCC's position is to continue to support the existing screening recommendations which are found in the Texas Cancer Plan: annual screening using mammography and clinical breast examination for all women beginning at age 40. This recommendation corresponds with the recommendations of many state and national cancer organizations reflected in TCCCC's membership including The American Cancer Society, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Sister's Network, Inc., Lance Armstrong Foundation, MD Anderson Cancer Center and many others. Links to both the USPSTF recommendations and several TCCCC member group's positions and press releases are provided as resources below.



TCCCC will continue to monitor the issues and facts surrounding this controversy on breast cancer screening, serving as a resource for its members and Texans as required by the Texas Cancer Plan to "identify and address sources of public confusion regarding risk." It is clear that the USPSTF conducted a rigorous, evidence and population based analysis of current worldwide research to develop its screening recommendations. TCCCC wishes to remind its members that population-based research, while generalizable for populations at large, may not fully reflect the evidence base of minority and other underserved groups who frequently are not appropriately represented in such studies. For many minority populations in the US and worldwide, inclusion in study findings frequently occur as a footnote stating that there was inconclusive evidence for these population

groups due to a lack of data or size of study sample.

TCCCC is also monitoring the recent American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommendations that women can be screened less frequently for cervical cancer with the Pap test (cervical cytology) than previously recommended. The previous ACOG recommendations were to begin screening within 3 years of becoming sexually active or at age 21 (which ever was younger) and to continue annually. Now ACOG recommends that women wait until age 21 and then be screened every 2 years until age 30. Thereafter following three consecutive negative tests, women should be screened once every 3 years. In regard to these recommendations, TCCCC's position is to stand by the current recommendations in the Texas Cancer Plan which conform to the previous recommendations of the USPSTF and the NCI.

#### **TCCCC 's Future Role and Plans**

TCCCC will continue to monitor the issues and discussions relating to both breast mammography and cervical cancer screenings acting as a resource to clarify issues and address sources of confusion and concern among our members and Texans in general. The sequencing and mapping of the human genome, and the explosive number of genome-wide association studies conducted over the last decade, herald a new era of personalized medicine. This vision of personalized medicine, where a patient's personal genetic and environmental information is used collectively to predict individual risks of disease and responsiveness to drugs, promises to revolutionize screening strategies and medical management for cancer and many other chronic illnesses. At the same time, as healthcare policy moves increasingly toward the use of population and evidence-based studies upon which to base recommendations for legislative actions with budget and spending implications, conflicts such as these will come increasingly to the fore and into public discussion. TCCCC looks forward to continuing and expanding its role in providing a fact base and resources to

fight the war against cancer in collaboration with its members, for CPRIT and the people of Texas.

#### **Links to TCCCC Member Organization's Breast Cancer Screening Guidelines**

American Cancer Society

[http://www.cancer.org/docroot/MED/content/MED\\_2\\_1x\\_American\\_Cancer\\_Society\\_Responds\\_to\\_Changes\\_to\\_USPSTF\\_Mammography\\_Guidelines.asp](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/MED/content/MED_2_1x_American_Cancer_Society_Responds_to_Changes_to_USPSTF_Mammography_Guidelines.asp)

Baylor College of Medicine

<http://www.bcm.edu/news/item.cfm?newsID=1605>

Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas

<http://www.cprit.state.tx.us/news.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/uspstf/uspshrca.htm>

MD Anderson Cancer Center

<http://www.mdanderson.org/patient-and-cancer-information/cancer-information/cancer-topics/prevention-and-screening/cancer-screening-guidelines/early-detection-breast-cancer-screening-exams.html>

The Rose

<http://www.the-rose.org/ScreeningGuidelines.html>

Sisters Network, Inc.

<https://www.z2systems.com/np/clients/sisternetw/ork/news.jsp?news=5>

Susan G Komen for the Cure

<http://ww5.komen.org/KomenNewsArticle.aspx?id=6442451487&ecid=emkldec09:4>

United States Preventive Services Task Force

<http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/uspstf/uspshrca.htm>

National Breast Cancer Coalition

<http://takeaction.stopbreastcancer.org/site/PageServer?pagename=FAQsUSPSTF2009>

**If your organization would like to submit a link for our review, please email us at [lynda.taylor@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:lynda.taylor@dshs.state.tx.us).**