



Affordable Care Act: Preventive Services Task Force

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) is an independent panel of experts charged with reviewing the scientific evidence for clinical preventive services and developing evidence-based recommendations about their delivery.

The USPSTF publishes recommendations on various topics, including cancer screening, tobacco cessation and counseling for obesity.

The American Cancer Society and USPSTF are in agreement about most recommendations; however, they recently came to different conclusions on mammography screening and some types of colorectal cancer screening tests.

Fast Facts

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) advocates for the following changes to the USPSTF:

- Membership – USPSTF membership should include experts in clinical and community medicine, technology, health delivery, public health, and health data, and representatives of patients and those experienced in health disparities.
- Transparency – USPSTF meetings should be open to the public, and the methodologies used to establish priorities should be subject to public review and comment before being made final.
- Representation – USPSTF advisory panels should include a cross-section of interests, including patient representatives, experts in health care delivery and a range of health care providers.
- Outside sources – The Secretary of Health and Human Services should be empowered to recognize outside sources in determining recommendations for preventive services.

Clear and transparent review of scientific evidence is essential for effectively promoting cancer prevention and early detection.

Highlights of USPSTF in the Affordable Care Act

- Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) reestablishes the USPSTF (*Effective beginning 2010*)
- USPSTF will coordinate with the Community Preventive Services Task Force and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices
- Elevates USPSTF's significance because all private insurers and Medicare will be required to cover 100% of the cost for services with an "A" or "B" USPSTF rating
- Specifically mandates coverage for annual mammograms in all private plans and Medicare for women aged 40 and over

Implications for the American Cancer Society and ACS CAN

- ACS CAN will continue to advocate for a more transparent and inclusive process when USPSTF convenes and makes recommendations.
- ACS CAN will work with the Secretary of HHS to ensure that all evidence-based cancer prevention and early detection services are included in the essential benefit package for all public and private plans.
- The Society will continue to be a leader in evaluating and publishing cancer screening guidelines and will provide input on the evidence to the USPSTF in its guidelines process.