

Pass HB 281 & SB 447: Increase Access to Prostate Cancer Screenings for High-Risk Pennsylvanians

Prostate Cancer in Pennsylvania

In 2026, an estimated 13,470 Pennsylvanians will be diagnosed with prostate cancer; 1,440 will die from the disease.ⁱ

- 2025 statistics from the American Cancer Society show alarming trends in prostate cancer incidence and mortality within the U.S., with disparities widening and advanced-stage diagnoses on the rise:
 - Previously declining incidence rates have reversed course and are now increasing by 3% each year.ⁱⁱ
- Early detection is critical for determining an effective treatment plan and improving survival outcomes – while prostate cancer is the most common cancer diagnosis among men in the U.S., accounting for 30% of all male cancers in 2025,ⁱⁱⁱ there is a 99% survival rate for early-stage diagnosis, compared to 29% for late stage.^{iv}
- Yet, screening rates are decreasing, with only 33% of Pennsylvanian men 50+ up to date on their screening.
- Prostate cancer is often asymptomatic until metastatic. Screening helps detect the disease early when it's most treatable and survivable.

Unequal Coverage for High-Risk Individuals

Prostate cancer does not impact all men equally. Individuals who are at high risk of developing prostate cancer should be able to access screenings without any barriers. High risk factors include the following: at least forty years of age with personal or family history of prostate cancer, first-degree relative with a genetic alteration or cancer associated with increased risk of prostate cancer.

Cost barriers can deter individuals from getting the screening needed to catch prostate cancer as early as possible. When caught early, there is a better chance of survival, yet financial toxicity obstructs screening access.

- Cost-sharing drives men to forgo needed cancer screenings, annual exams, and visits to the urologist.
- Without screening, there is a greater likelihood that cancer will not be detected until it has advanced to late stage, making it much deadlier and more costly to treat.

What HB 281/SB 447 Would Do:

This legislation will increase high-risk Pennsylvanians' access to prostate cancer screening by requiring coverage and removing out-of-pocket costs for annual prostate cancer screening for individuals who are at least 40 years of age and are more likely to develop prostate cancer based on their risk factors.

Recommendation

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) believes that all people should have the opportunity to receive lifesaving cancer screenings. Eliminating out-of-pocket costs for prostate cancer screenings for high-risk Pennsylvanians will likely result in more patients detecting cancer earlier. We urge lawmakers to pass HB 281/SB 447 to increase access to prostate cancer screenings for individuals at high-risk of developing prostate cancer.

ⁱAmerican Cancer Society. *Cancer Facts & Figures 2026*. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2026.

ⁱⁱ Kratzer TB, Mazzitelli N, Star J, Dahut WL, Jemal A, Siegel RL. Prostate cancer statistics, 2025. *CA Cancer J Clin*. 2025; 75(6):485-497. doi:10.3322/caac.70028

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid

^{iv} SEER*Explorer: An interactive website for SEER cancer statistics. Surveillance Research Program, National Cancer Institute: 2024 April 17. Available from: <https://seer.cancer.gov/statistics-network/explorer>.