

An Open Letter in Support of Expanded Lung Cancer Screening Recommendation



May 2021

We write in support of the March 2021 update to the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) lung cancer screening recommendation.

Lung cancer is the nation's leading cancer killer in the United States. An estimated 235,760 new cases are expected to be diagnosed in 2021, and 131,880 people are expected to lose their lives. We strongly support lung cancer screening for high-risk populations because we know that early detection improves the chances of survival. Screening is essential to saving lives, particularly because lung cancer is typically found in the later stages and has an overall 5-year survival rate of just 21.8%.

The updated USPSTF recommendation expands the current guidelines to include individuals ages 50 to 80 years who have a 20 pack-year smoking history and currently smoke or have quit within the past 15 years. This recommendation will nearly double the number of individuals eligible for screening and has the potential to save significantly more lives than the current guidelines.

The updated USPSTF recommendation is also an important step forward in addressing racial disparities associated with lung cancer. The expanded criteria will more than double the number of Black and Hispanic people eligible for screening and increase the number of American Indians and Alaskan Natives eligible almost three-fold.

Under the Affordable Care Act, most private insurance plans will need to update their policies to cover screening without cost-sharing for individuals newly eligible under the new guidelines for plan years beginning March 31, 2022. We call on all policymakers to consider updating their coverage guidelines to align with these updated recommendations as soon as possible and remove any financial or other barriers to screening so that all people at high risk for lung cancer can access this lifesaving preventive service.

Sincerely,

American Lung Association
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Academy of Family Physicians
American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST)
American College of Radiology
American Thoracic Society
American Association for Cancer Research
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
Oncology Nursing Society
Public Health Law Center
Truth Initiative

A Breath of Hope Lung Foundation
Adagio Health
Advent Health Waterman
Al-Con Counseling, Inc.
ALK Positive Support Group
American Lung Cancer Screening Initiative
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Baptist Cancer Center
Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center
Beaumont Health
Blackfeet Tobacco Use Prevention Program
Breathe Easy, Grant County
Breathe Southern California
Brigham and Women's Hospital
Brigham Health
Cancer Support Community
Caring Ambassadors Program, Inc.
Carolina Services of North Carolina, LLC
CentraCare
Citizens for Radioactive Radon Reduction
City of Hope
Clifton F. Mountain Foundation for Education &
Research in Lung Cancer
Dignity Health - St. Joseph's Medical Center
Dignity Health Mercy Medical Center Merced
Duke Cancer Institute
DuPage Medical Group
Dusty Joy Foundation (LiveLung)
Henry Ford Health System
Hillsdale Hospital
ICAN, International Cancer Advocacy Network
Indiana University Health Melvin and Bren Simon
Cancer Center
Inova Schar Cancer Institute
Kaiser Permanente Colorado
Kindred Healthcare
Korman Respiratory Institute at Thomas Jefferson
University
KRAS Kickers
LifeLong Medical Care
Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center
Lung Cancer Circle of Hope
Lung Cancer Connection
Lung Cancer Foundation of America
Lung Cancer Initiative
Lung Cancer Research Foundation
Maine Lung Cancer Coalition

Mary Bird Perkins-Our Lady of the Lake
Cancer Center
Mass General Brigham
Massachusetts General Hospital
Mercy Health Mclees Clinic
MET Crusaders Cancer Advocacy Group
Metropolitan YMCAs of Mississippi
MeVis Medical Solutions AG
MidMichigan Health
Missouri Academy of Family Physicians
Norton Pulmonary Specialists
Oklahoma Hospital Association
Paoli Hospital
Patient Advocate Foundation and SelfMade
Health Network
Primary Care Collaborative
ProMedica Cancer Institute
Respiratory Health Association
Rush University System for Health
Saint Alphonsus RMC
Saint Joseph Mercy Health System
Siteman Cancer Center
Smoking Cessation Leadership Center
Society for Public Health Education
Society of Thoracic Radiology
The Fleischner Society
The University of Kansas Cancer Center
Tobacco Free Alliance of Virginia
University of Kansas Cancer Center
University of Louisville School of Medicine
University of Michigan Rogel Cancer
Center
University of Minnesota Health Fairview
University of Virginia Cancer Center
University of Wisconsin School of Medicine
and Public Health Center for Tobacco
Research and Intervention
Upstage Lung Cancer.org
Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center
VCU Massey Cancer Center
WVU Cancer Institute