

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force

The [U.S. Preventive Services Task Force \(USPSTF or Task Force\)](#) is an independent group of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine. The Task Force works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services such as:

- **Screenings**
- **Counseling services**
- **Preventive medications**

These recommendations only apply to people who have no signs or symptoms of the specific disease or condition that the screening, counseling, or preventive medication targets. Recommendations address only services offered in the primary care setting or services referred by a primary care clinician. The Task Force makes recommendations to help primary care clinicians and patients decide together whether a preventive service is right for a patient's needs.

AHRQ provides the resources—scientific, administrative, and dissemination support—for the Task Force to make independent recommendations about clinical preventive services.

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

The [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality \(AHRQ\)](#) is an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). AHRQ's mission is to produce evidence to make health care safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable, and to work within HHS and with other partners to make sure that the evidence is understood and used. The 1998 Public Health Service Act and the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act authorize and require AHRQ to convene the USPSTF and to provide scientific, administrative, and dissemination support. Specifically, the USPSTF program within AHRQ's [Center for Evidence and Practice Improvement \(CEPI\)](#) is charged with providing this support to the USPSTF.

How AHRQ Supports the USPSTF

To support the Task Force, the USPSTF program staff:

- **Assists** with day-to-day operations
- **Coordinates** the development of comprehensive evidence reports
- **Supports** the Task Force in the consistent and transparent application of its methods
- **Provides** assistance with the promotion and dissemination of Task Force materials and recommendations

In addition, the Director of AHRQ appoints Task Force members, with guidance from the Task Force chairs. AHRQ also supports the Task Force through the funding of Evidence-based Practice Centers (EPCs), which are academic or research organizations with expertise in conducting systematic evidence reviews. The EPCs work with the Task Force to develop research plans and conduct the evidence reviews that the Task Force uses to determine its recommendations.