Aug. 1, 2012, 7:05 a.m. EDT

New Research Shows Prostate Cancer Testing Prevents 17,000 Men from Developing Advanced Prostate Cancer

Study confirms PSA and early detection saves lives

TALLAHASSEE, Fla., Aug. 1, 2012 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- The Large Urology Group Practice Association (LUGPA), representing more than 1,800 urologists, today applauded a newly released study confirming the impact of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing on the early detection of prostate cancer.

The study, published online, and soon to be published in a print edition of Cancer, compared the incidence of advanced prostate cancer at initial diagnosis in 2008 to that seen before the advent of PSA testing (1983-85). Researchers found that without the PSA test, it is likely that more than three times as many men would have presented with advanced disease.

"The results overwhelmingly confirm what urologists, prostate cancer patients and patient advocacy groups have been saying," said Dr. Deepak A. Kapoor, President of LUGPA and Chairman and CEO of Integrated Medical Professionals, PLLC. "Eliminating the PSA test to screen for prostate cancer would result in a public health catastrophe, as potentially tens of thousands of men who could have been cured will present with advanced disease and possibly die needlessly."

Earlier this summer, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) disregarded input from patient advocacy groups and experts in the field in issuing a grade "D" recommendation for PSA-based prostate cancer screening in asymptomatic men. This one size fits all policy places those at greatest risk for prostate cancer - African-Americans and those with a family history of prostate cancer - in a dangerous situation. These patients urgently need to be educated about their risks of developing cancer, and the role that screening could play in early diagnosis and treatment.
"The 10 year survival for prostate cancer has increased from around 50 percent before PSA testing to an astounding 98 percent. We are not detecting more cancer; we are detecting cancer earlier and saving lives," said Kapoor.

The USPSTF has come under fire for questionable recommendations in the past. This is the same organization that attempted to restrict access to mammography screening for breast cancer and suggested that women no longer be taught breast self-examination. Legislation with bipartisan support was introduced in June to reform the USPSTF process, in hopes of ensuring more transparency and accountability regarding the panel and its health recommendations.

LUGPA joins the American Urological Association (AUA) and the American Association of Clinical Urologists (AACU) in support of PSA screening for well-informed men who wish to pursue early diagnosis for a disease that is the second leading cause of cancer death in men.

Please visit LUGPA's website for additional information on PSA screening. To access the full research study, click here.

About LUGPA represents 95 large urology group practices in the United States, with more than 1,800 physicians who make up more than 20 percent of the nation's practicing urologists. LUGPA and its member practices are committed to best practices, research, data collection, and benchmarking to promote quality clinical outcomes.

SOURCE Large Urology Group Practice Association