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# PSA Screening in Lewiston Maine

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# PSA Screening at Central Maine Medical Center in Lewiston, Maine

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## Description of Need

- PSA screening to detect early asymptomatic prostate cancer is a controversial practice. While screening has been shown to increase detection years earlier than symptoms develop, a mortality benefit has been harder to show. The practice also leads to many false positive results and unnecessary biopsies.
- Both the USPSTF and American Urological Association currently recommend the choice to screen in average risk individuals be based off the personal values and goals of the patient.
- This is a complicated decision to make as a patient and a difficult conversation to facilitate for the doctor because there is good evidence for and against the practice.

# Public Health Cost

- Prostate Cancer is the most common cancer that affects men and is the second leading cause of cancer death in men.
- PSA-based screening programs in men ages 55 to 69 years may prevent up to 1 to 2 deaths from prostate cancer over approximately 13 years per 1,000 men screened. Screening programs may also prevent up to 3 cases of metastatic prostate cancer per 1,000 men screened over 13 years.
- Follow-up of large randomized trials suggests that 20% to 50% of men diagnosed with prostate cancer through screening may be “over-diagnosed” (treatment of cancer that would never have been symptomatic).

# Community Perspective

- Dr. Jordan Kurta, a Urologist at CMMC, believes that PSA screening is an effective tool to help assess prostate cancer risk but acknowledges that different physicians use this tool differently.
- Family Medicine Physicians at CMMC currently use the AUA and USPSTF recommendations to discuss PSA screening with their patients and initiate screening based on these conversations.
- Given the recent changes in recommendations from the USPSTF in both 2012 and 2017 it can be hard to keep up with the most recent evidence

# Intervention and Methodology

- A short, easy to read handout that patients can use to help them understand the risks and benefits of choosing to screen covering the following topics
  - Personal risk factors
  - Potential side effects of treatment
  - Risk of false positives and unnecessary treatment

## Results/Response

- A take-home handout for patients to review the risks and benefits of PSA screening and how their own personal values effect the choice to screen.
- Refresher handout of the USPSTF and AUA's most recent recommendations for PSA testing for providers at CMMC family medicine residency

# Effectiveness and Limitations

- Handout allows patient's to digest the information at their own pace.
- Educating patient's ahead of time to decrease the time providers must spend on education of a complicated topic during the office visit.
- Potential to create circular discussion between providers and patients



# Future Recommendations

- Recommendations change constantly as new evidence emerges and new clinical tools are found and evaluated. Patient education materials will have to change with new understanding of prostate cancer screening.
- Assess efficacy of handout by Family Physicians. Does the information help patient's feel comfortable in their decision or generate more questions and anxiety around making and living with a choice?

# References

- “AUA Guideline: Early Detection of Prostate Cancer.” *American Urological Association - Early Detection of Prostate Cancer*, 2015. [www.auanet.org/guidelines/early-detection-of-prostate-cancer-\(2013-reviewed-and-validity-confirmed-2015\)](http://www.auanet.org/guidelines/early-detection-of-prostate-cancer-(2013-reviewed-and-validity-confirmed-2015)).
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