

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Issues Draft Recommendation Statement on Screening for Depression in Adults

Evidence indicates screening beneficial in this population

WASHINGTON, D.C. – July 28, 2015 – The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) posted a draft recommendation today on screening for depression in adults. After reviewing the evidence, the Task Force concludes that all adults over the age of 18, including pregnant and postpartum women, should be screened for depression in a primary care setting with adequate systems in place to ensure accurate diagnosis, effective treatment, and appropriate followup. **This is a grade B recommendation.**

The Task Force is providing an opportunity for public comment on this draft recommendation statement and the draft evidence review until August 24. All comments will be considered as the Task Force develops its final recommendation and final evidence review.

Grade in this recommendation:

B: Recommended.

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Depression is one of the leading causes of disability in adults and is common among patients seen in primary care. It can impact a person's quality of life and is associated with an increase in suicide rates, among other health problems. Pregnant and postpartum women are also affected by depression, where both mother and child can experience the effects of the illness.

"Depression is not only common, it is one of the leading causes of disability in the United States," says Task Force Vice-Chair Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo, Ph.D., M.D., M.A.S. "The Task Force's recommendation for all adults to be screened by their primary care physician will help to identify depression and connect patients with the treatment and support they need."

In reviewing the evidence, the Task Force found that people who were identified through screening and treated for depression with anti-depressants, psychotherapy, or both showed improvement in depression symptoms and outcomes.

"Screening for and identifying depression is an important part of wellness and health," said Task Force member Linda Baumann, Ph.D., R.N., A.P.R.N.

The Task Force's draft recommendation statement has been posted for public comment on the Task Force Web site at www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org. Comments can be submitted from July 28 to August 24 at <http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Name/us-preventive-services-task-force-opportunities-for-public-comment>.

The Task Force is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine that works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medications.

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