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SUSAN G. KOMEN FOR THE CURE® CONCERNED FEDERAL SCREENING MAMMOGRAPHY GUIDELINES BEGINNING TO LIMIT ACCESS FOR YOUNGER WOMEN

DALLAS – February 22, 2010 -- When a federal panel late last year recommended that American women in their 40s need not get annual screening mammograms, Susan G. Komen for the Cure® raised concerns that the new guidelines would result in denial of the potentially life-saving procedure for too many young women.

Evidence appears to be building that those concerns over the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force guidelines may have been justified.

“Our great fear at Susan G. Komen for the Cure continues to be that women who should be getting mammograms aren’t getting mammograms because of the confusion over this issue,” said Elizabeth Thompson, Komen’s senior vice president of Medical and Scientific Affairs. “As the world’s leading breast cancer organization, Komen’s position is unchanged: women in their 40s should have no impediment to regular mammography, and women at increased risk for breast cancer absolutely should be talking with their health care providers about screening.”

Today, the Avon Breast Cancer Foundation released results of a survey showing fewer women under 50 are getting mammograms since the release of the new mammogram guidelines. The Avon study further showed that several states are cutting funding to screening programs aimed at low-income women.

Those new numbers follow a poll from the *Annals of Internal Medicine* released last week that shows, of the doctors who responded, 67 percent said they will stop routinely advising women in their 40s to get annual mammograms and 62 percent will advise women 50 to 74 to get a mammogram every other year rather than annually. In addition, 41 percent will stop advising women to do monthly self-examinations and 19 percent will stop doing clinical breast examinations.

The Avon results and *Annals of Internal Medicine* poll numbers combine to paint a picture of potential obstacles for American women to receive regular mammography screening appropriate for their ages.

“Komen continues to advocate against attempts to cut funding for mammograms using USPSTF’s guidelines as cover,” Komen’s Thompson said. “As we do so, we’re proactively working for better screening technologies for the long term.”

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Several groups, including the American College of Radiology and the American Cancer Society, have echoed Komen's concerns since the USPSTF issued its recommendations last October and have continued to urge women of average risk for breast cancer to begin annual screening mammography annually starting at the age of 40.

Since the onset of regular mammography screening in 1990, the mortality rate from breast cancer, which had been unchanged for the preceding 50 years, has decreased by 30 percent.

About Susan G. Komen for the Cure®

Nancy G. Brinker promised her dying sister, Susan G. Komen, she would do everything in her power to end breast cancer forever. In 1982, that promise became Susan G. Komen for the Cure and launched the global breast cancer movement. Today, Komen for the Cure is the world's largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists fighting to save lives, empower people, ensure quality care for all and energize science to find the cures. Thanks to events like the Komen Race for the Cure®, we have invested more than \$1.5 billion to fulfill our promise, becoming the largest source of nonprofit funds dedicated to the fight against breast cancer in the world. For more information about Susan G. Komen for the Cure, breast health or breast cancer, visit www.komen.org or call 1-877 GO KOMEN.

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