



Women Against Prostate Cancer (WAPC)

HP 2020 Regional Meeting : May 28, 2008
DC area Healthy People Stakeholders Meeting
Bethesda, MD: NIH Natcher Conference Center

Remarks of:
Theresa Morrow, *Program Director*:
Women Against Prostate Cancer

Today we face a major gender disparity in health in our country. Men continue to experience a life expectancy that is 6 years less than that of their female counterparts. Men also die at higher rates of the top causes of death¹. Cancer is the number 2 killer of men with prostate cancer being the most common type, after skin cancer, with 1 in 6 men getting the disease during their lifetime.²

Women Against Prostate Cancer is requesting that HP 2020 continue the unfulfilled mission of HP 2010 to address gender disparities in health among our population, including the continued education and promotion of screenings for prostate cancer.

Prostate cancer has a huge impact on our society:

1. In 2008, an estimated 186,320 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer and the disease will cause 28,660 deaths.
2. The sheer numbers and burden of this disease are overwhelming. Prostate cancer has a significant economic, physical, and emotional impact on payers, physicians, and patients.
3. Men who do survive prostate cancer experience a significantly lower quality of life, especially when the disease is caught at later stages.

We can ease some of this burden through early detection, education, and promotion and increased availability of prostate screenings. We know that when detected early prostate cancer is a highly treatable disease. We hope that the HP2020 goals will show support for the education of this disease and help lessen the burden to society of prostate cancer.

As a woman and representative of Women Against Prostate Cancer, I know that gender disparities in health do not affect men in isolation, but can lead to devastating consequences for entire families. Children missing out on spending time with their fathers and grandfathers, wives becoming widows when they should be growing old

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics; Health, United States, 2007 with Chartbook on Trends in the Health of Americans, pages 178-181.

² American Cancer Society, Overview: Prostate Cancer, http://www.cancer.org/docroot/CRI/content/CRI_2_2_1X_How_many_men_get_prostate_cancer_36.asp?nav=crl

with their husbands, and families left in poverty with the death of their fathers and husbands.

Gender disparities are clearly illustrated by funding levels among federal government programs.

- Funding for gender research at NIH includes:³
 - i. \$ 4,376,000,000 for women's health (breast cancer, cervical cancer, ovarian cancer, and "women's health")
 - ii. And \$345,000,000 for men's health (prostate cancer)

- Funding for programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention include:⁴
 - i. \$ 309,486,000 for breast and cervical cancer
 - ii. \$ 13,243,000 for prostate cancer

In Conclusion, I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to share our recommendations and we hope that HP 2020 will continue the mission of HP 2010 to examine and address gender disparities in health and wellness with specific goals to seek gender equity in education, outreach, and research among federal and state agencies.

³ National Institutes of Health (NIH), Estimates of Funding for Various Diseases, Conditions, Research Areas. Table Updated February 5, 2008. Found at <http://www.nih.gov/news/fundingresearchareas.htm>

⁴ <http://www.ovaconline.org>