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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Solicitation for Nominations for Members of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF)

AGENCY: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), HHS.

ACTION: Solicits nominations for new members of USPSTF.

SUMMARY: The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) invites nominations of individuals qualified to serve as members of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF).

DATES: All nominations submitted in writing or electronically will be considered for appointment to the USPSTF. Nominations must be received by May 15th of a given year to be considered for appointment to begin in January of the following year.

Arrangement for Public Inspection

Nominations and applications are kept on file at the Center for Primary Care, Prevention, and Clinical Partnerships, AHRQ, and are available for review during business hours. AHRQ does not reply to individual nominations, but considers all nominations in selecting members. Information regarded as private and personal, such as a nominee's social security number, home and e-mail addresses, home telephone and fax numbers, or names of family members will not be disclosed to the public (in accord with the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6); 45 CFR 5.67).

Nomination Submissions

Nominations may be submitted in writing or electronically, but should include:

1. The applicant's current curriculum vitae and contact information, including mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number, and
2. A letter explaining how this individual meets the qualification requirements and how he/she would contribute to the USPSTF. The letter should also attest to the nominee's willingness to serve as a member of the USPSTF.

AHRQ will later ask persons under serious consideration for USPSTF membership to provide detailed information that will permit evaluation of possible significant conflicts of interest. Such information will concern matters such as financial holdings, consultancies, and research grants or contracts.

To obtain a diversity of perspectives, AHRQ particularly encourages nominations of women, members of minority populations, and persons with disabilities. Interested individuals can self-nominate. Organizations and individuals may nominate one or more persons qualified for membership on the USPSTF at any time. Individuals nominated prior to May 15, 2013, who continue to have interest in serving on the USPSTF, should be re-nominated.

Qualification Requirements

To qualify for the USPSTF and support its mission, an applicant or nominee should, at a minimum, demonstrate knowledge, expertise and national leadership in the following areas:

1. The critical evaluation of research published in peer reviewed literature and in the methods of evidence review;
2. Clinical prevention, health promotion and primary health care; and

3. Implementation of evidence-based recommendations in clinical practice including at the clinician-patient level, practice level, and health system level.

Additionally, the Task Force benefits from members with expertise in the following areas:

- Public health
- Health equity and the reduction of health disparities
- Application of science to health policy
- Communication of scientific findings to multiple audiences including health care professionals, policy makers and the general public.

Candidates with experience and skills in any of these areas should highlight them in their nomination materials.

Applicants must have no substantial conflicts of interest, whether financial, professional, or intellectual, that would impair the scientific integrity of the work of the USPSTF and must be willing to complete regular conflict of interest disclosures.

Applicants must have the ability to work collaboratively with a team of diverse professionals who support the mission of the USPSTF. Applicants must have adequate time to contribute substantively to the work products of the USPSTF.

ADDRESSES: Submit your responses either in writing or electronically to:

Joya Chowdhury
ATTN: USPSTF Nominations
Center for Primary Care, Prevention, and Clinical Partnerships
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
540 Gaither Road

Rockville, Maryland 20850

USPSTFmembersnominations@ahrq.hhs.gov

Nominee Selection

Nominated individuals will be selected for the USPSTF on the basis of their qualifications (in particular, those that address the required qualifications, as outlined) and the current expertise needs of the USPSTF. It is anticipated that new members will be invited to serve on the USPSTF beginning in January, 2015. All nominated individuals will be considered; however, strongest consideration will be given to individuals with demonstrated training and expertise in the area of family medicine. AHRQ will retain and may consider nominations received this year and not selected during this cycle for future vacancies.

Some USPSTF members without primary health care clinical experience may be selected based on their expertise in methodological issues such as meta-analysis, analytic modeling or clinical epidemiology. For individuals with clinical expertise in primary health care, additional qualifications in methodology would enhance their candidacy.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Joya Chowdhury at USPSTFmembersnominations@ahrq.hhs.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Under Title IX of the Public Health Service Act, AHRQ is charged with enhancing the quality, appropriateness, and effectiveness of health care services and access to such services 42 U.S.C. 299(b). AHRQ accomplishes these goals through scientific research and promotion of improvements in clinical practice, including clinical prevention of diseases and other health conditions. See 42 U.S.C. 299(b).

The USPSTF, an independent body of experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine, works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendations about the effectiveness of clinical preventive services and health promotion. The recommendations made by the USPSTF address clinical preventive services for adults and children, and include screening tests, counseling services, and preventive medications.

The USPSTF was first established in 1984 under the auspices of the U.S. Public Health Service. Currently, the USPSTF is convened by the Director of AHRQ, and AHRQ provides ongoing scientific, administrative, and dissemination support for the USPSTF's operation. USPSTF members serve four year terms. New members are selected each year to replace those members who are completing their appointments.

The USPSTF is charged with rigorously evaluating the effectiveness, appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of clinical preventive services and formulating or updating recommendations regarding the appropriate provision of preventive services. See 42 U.S.C. 299b-4(a)(1). Current USPSTF recommendations and associated evidence reviews are available on the Internet (www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org).

USPSTF members currently meet three times a year for two days in the Washington, D.C. area. A significant portion of the USPSTF's work occurs between meetings during conference calls and via email discussions. Member duties include prioritizing topics, designing research plans, reviewing and commenting on systematic evidence reviews of evidence, discussing and making recommendations on preventive services, reviewing stakeholder comments, drafting final recommendation documents, and participating in workgroups on specific topics and methods. Members can expect to receive frequent emails, can expect to participate in multiple conference calls each month, and can expect to have periodic interaction with stakeholders. AHRQ estimates that members

devote approximately 200 hours a year outside of in-person meetings to their USPSTF duties. The members are all volunteers and do not receive any compensation beyond support for travel to in person meetings.

Dated: February 26, 2014.

Richard Kronick,
AHRQ Director.

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