



## Women's Preventive Services Initiative: Comments on Draft Recommendations

### ***AWHP Comment: Screening and Counseling for Intimate Partner Violence***

The Alliance for Women's Health & Prevention (AWHP) is a collaborative 501(c)(4) non-profit organization focused exclusively on women's preventive health across all life stages and irrespective of any one disease area. With this focus in mind, we support the Women's Preventive Services Initiative (WPSI)'s recommendation to screen adolescent and adult women for intimate partner and domestic violence annually and when privacy is assured (eg, alone or unaccompanied) whether at an in-person or virtual visit.

AWHP suggests that WPSI expand their research recommendations to include studies focused on the role [intimate partner violence plays \(IPV\) in driving maternal mortality](#).

Research should also study the effectiveness and harms of IPV screening methods and interventions for pregnant people, factoring in patient preferences including patients' culture, ethnicity, language, and age. In addition, research focused on nonpregnant and pregnant people should determine [IPV incidence within a variety of communities](#), factoring for rural, suburban and urban environments.

### ***AWHP Comment: Breast Cancer Screening for Women at Average Risk***

The Alliance for Women's Health & Prevention (AWHP) was founded in 2022 with a mission to advance policy that drives equitable access and prevents the burden and progression of disease to improve the lives and health of all women and girls. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this draft recommendation.

Given the importance of early detection, we recommend WPSI to update its guidance to begin screening at age 40 and be conducted annually for women at moderate risk.

A recent [report](#) from the American Cancer Society found that cancer rate rose by 1% annually from 2012 to 2021, with even greater increases among women under age 50. These trends highlight the need to ensure women are encouraged to be screened at age 40.

Importantly, these updates would also help to address the health disparities we see with the disease given Black women are more likely to develop aggressive cancers at a younger age and Black women have a more than 40% higher death rate due to breast cancer than white women.

### ***AWHP Comment: Patient Navigation Services for Breast and Cervical Cancer***

The Alliance for Women's Health & Prevention (AWHP) is a collaborative 501(c)(4) non-profit organization that was founded in 2022 with a mission to advance policy that drives equitable access and prevents the burden and progression of disease to improve the lives and health of all women and girls. We proudly support

Women's Preventive Services Initiative (WPSI)'s recommendation to uplift patient navigators and the services they provide to help guide patients through their course of care.

This is especially important given concerning trends that adherence to cervical cancer screening and follow-up of abnormal results has declined to troubling levels and the majority of cervical cancers are diagnosed in women who are either under-screened, never screened, or have not followed up on abnormal results. Patient navigation can be an effective solution to address several barriers that contribute to the lack of adherence to screening and follow-up, such as lack of education, unawareness of the need for screening, and access issues, including language barriers, transportation difficulties, and trouble booking appointments. Tailoring patient navigation to the specific needs of the population is crucial. This might involve utilizing lay health workers, providing educational resources, offering language translations, sending reminder calls, and assisting with appointment scheduling or transportation. We therefore suggest that WPSI expand their research recommendations to include additional comparative effectiveness trials of patient navigation services for breast and cervical cancer screening based on provided language, transportation, and social services. It is critical to understand the effectiveness of patient navigation services as they are tailored to address the needs of specific populations. Understanding that it may be difficult to study the effectiveness of these services at a population-level, AWHP suggests expanding research recommendations to account for patient navigation services as they are tailored to different communities. By doing so, we can ensure that our efforts ultimately foster equitable access to breast and cervical cancer screening among all patients.