

November 23, 2010

Gloria Washington
Attn: USPSTF Nominations
Center for Primary Care, Prevention, and Clinical Partnerships
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To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare (National Council) and its member organizations – 1,700 Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) and other community-based mental health and addiction providers serving over 6 million low income children and adults with mental health and substance use disorders – I am pleased to nominate Dr. Thomas W. Doub to be serve as a member of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force.

Dr. Doub has devoted his career to the study and implementation of evidence-based practices in real-world behavioral health settings. His visionary leadership and work with the Centerstone Research Institute and its Knowledge Network of research-minded community mental health centers is already beginning to positively influence the behavioral healthcare field. Dr. Thomas Doub's background and skills are well-suited for the tasks of this committee, and his unique behavioral healthcare expertise would complement the skills of the current committee. I have spoken with Dr. Doub, and he is willing to serve on this committee for the full four-year term.

Improving preventive care and wellness for persons with mental illness and addictions disorders is critical. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, mental and substance abuse conditions are among the most common health disorders in the United States, affecting nearly 50% of adults at some point during their lifetime. A series of recent studies consistently show that persons with serious mental illnesses who are clients of the public mental health system ***die sooner than other Americans, and have an average age of death at 52.*** These appalling health disparity statistics are due in large part to the failure to adequately treat largely preventable, co-occurring disorders. Persons with severe mental illnesses have a strikingly high incidence of co-occurring chronic diseases, including heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, cancer, asthma, and cardio-pulmonary conditions of every type – and only a tiny percentage of this population regularly receive the preventive services that could keep them in good health.

Moreover, there is a behavioral health component to prevention for many other types of health conditions. For example, many chronic illnesses have important behavioral health components such as inactivity, smoking, or poor management of chronic stress. There is growing evidence indicating an interaction between mental health conditions and other health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, HIV/AIDS, and diabetes. From preventing early onset of mental illness to preventing comorbid occurrences of mental illness or substance abuse in people who are diagnosed with other illnesses, behavioral health is a central component of prevention and wellness.

I was pleased to read in the Federal Register that the committee is specifically seeking individuals with expertise in counseling and behavioral interventions for primary care patients, along with individuals with experience in medical decision making and behavioral medicine. Dr. Thomas Doub has expertise in all of these areas and would be a valuable addition to the committee.

As a Ph.D. in Clinical and Quantitative Psychology, Dr. Doub obtained specialized training in evaluating community-based longitudinal outcomes with using advanced research and statistical methods, including structural equations and hierarchical linear modeling. He has provided direct clinical services and previously participated in national longitudinal evaluation efforts funded by NIMH, NIDA, NIAAA, CDC, CMS, and SAMHSA. Dr. Doub has chosen to work and conduct research in a community setting, rather than pursue a traditional university career because of his interest in evaluating what works in the real world.

Dr. Doub is currently the Site PI on NIH- and AHRQ-funded projects and also oversees the evaluation for eighteen existing SAMHSA-funded studies examining implementation of evidence-based treatment and prevention practices for mental health, substance abuse, and/or co-occurring disorders. He has extensive experience in clinical research, federal project management and program evaluation, and statistical analysis at the CMHC, State, and University level and has held research positions with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities and Vanderbilt University

Under Dr. Doub's research leadership, the Centerstone Research Institute (CRI: www.centerstoneresearch.org) has become a nationally recognized force in behavioral healthcare research and innovation. Since 2003, CRI has secured more than \$60 million in federal and private funding and has conducted more than 120 research studies at Centerstone sites ranging from the use of clinical decision support technology to improving medication management for depression to the development of new measures for mental health outcome measurement.

A skilled collaborator, Dr. Doub has been the driving force behind the Knowledge Network (www.knproject.org). This innovative project brings together community mental health centers, academic researchers, behavioral health advocates, industry leaders, and policymakers in order to work together in transforming behavioral healthcare. Sponsored by the Centerstone Research Institute, the Knowledge Network endeavors to stimulate collaboration, encourage academic research in applied research settings, and advocate for research-informed federal funding and policy priorities.

Some of the most exciting work that Dr. Doub is currently involved in comes from his work with data analytics and the potential of health information technologies to improve healthcare provision. Due to his innovative work with data analytics, CRI was recognized as a 2010 Best Practices Award Winner by The Data Warehousing Institute (TDWI), the first behavioral health organization ever to be recognized by TDWI. The work that Dr. Doub and his team is doing in the development of predictive modeling to inform treatment decisions at the beginning of care has great promise to improve medical decision making in fields beyond behavioral healthcare. This work is being featured as part of the the IBM Smarter Planet series.

Given the Task Force's charge to formulate recommendations for effective preventive services, it is crucial for at least one Task Force member to have extensive experience in the behavioral health field. As you consider your appointments to the Task Force, I urge you to select Dr. Tom Doub, who has, throughout his long career as a researcher and clinical psychologist, demonstrated unparalleled expertise in prevention research. Dr. Doub is uniquely positioned to provide an expert perspective on these issues, both today and in the future.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Linda Rosenberg, MSW, President and CEO
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare