

OFFICIAL SOCIETY OF BREAST IMAGING RESPONSE TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY HHS SECRETARY SEBELIUS REGARDING USPSTF MAMMOGRAPHY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Society of Breast Imaging (SBI) appreciates that HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius has reaffirmed that mammography is a crucial and life-saving tool in the fight against breast cancer and that policies for its use remain unchanged. We agree with Secretary Sebelius that the USPSTF report has caused great confusion – confusion that is unnecessary and potentially deadly. Mammography has been shown unequivocally to save lives and is primarily responsible for the 30% decline in breast cancer mortality in the United States over the past 20 years. The USPSTF conclusion – that women under age 50 should not undergo routine screening – conflicts with their own report, which confirms a benefit of mammography to women, age 40-49 that is statistically significant. We strongly urge women and their physicians to continue to adhere to the American Cancer Society recommendations of yearly screening beginning at age 40. These recommendations are based on a more thorough review and analysis of the available data, including randomized control trials and population based studies. The current confusion is not due to a lack of data but rather a misinterpretation of that data by the USPSTF. We feel that the most complete, informed and scientifically valid approach should be used in making recommendations, especially those at a national level. We urge the HHS to officially ask the USPSTF to rescind their mammography recommendations until such a report can be