

For Immediate Release
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**Oncologist at New Jersey Medical School Coordinates
Prostate Cancer Initiative to Train Barbers as Lay Health Educators**

NEWARK – Thirty barbers from Essex County will participate in a training session that is being coordinated to help them encourage their clients to get free prostate and colorectal cancer screening tests at one of two local hospitals. An oncologist at New Jersey Medical School has partnered with health professionals as well as city and county officials to coordinate The Prostate Net's Barbershop Initiative™ Training Session. This county-wide effort to raise awareness and offer free screenings will take place on Monday, January 14, from 8:30 a.m. to noon, at The New Hope Baptist Church, 106 Sussex Avenue, Newark.

According to Dr. Stanley H. Weiss, an oncologist and professor of preventive medicine and community health at New Jersey Medical School, the purpose of this initiative is to reduce prostate and colorectal cancer incidence and mortality rates. Essex County has the highest incidence rate of prostate cancer throughout the state and New Jersey has the highest incidence in the country. More cases occur among African American men than white men.

Oncologists, radiation oncologists, urologists and health outreach specialists will facilitate the training by sharing their expertise and answering questions. Brochures, posters and other educational information will be distributed. Barbers will be asked to encourage their customers to visit the UMDNJ-University Hospital or Saint Michaels' Medical Center for a free screening. One-on-one follow-up sessions will be offered to each barber.

Barbers have been identified in African American communities as leaders and a source of information about activities that may be taking place. The barbershop is a safe place where personal and social matters are often discussed. The barbers who are recruited into this program will receive training about prostate cancer risk factors and screening, in conjunction with training materials provided by The Prostate Net.

This program is supported in part by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services from a CDC grant. For more information, please call 973-972-4623.

WHAT: Local Barbers to Take the Lead on Encouraging Their African American Clients to Get Tested for Prostate and Colorectal Cancer

WHEN: Monday, January 14, from 8:30 a.m. to Noon

**WHERE: The New Hope Baptist Church
106 Sussex Avenue, Newark**

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