

# CALL TO ADVOCACY



## A propane-rooted organization stretches to “all walks of life” to fight prostate cancer

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**S**ervice to others. It's a staple of the propane industry and a binding characteristic among its professionals. For one organization created by three propane professionals, service goes beyond filling a customer's tank. Its efforts go toward raising awareness of prostate cancer among men across the country through its charitable acts.

Pros4Care was founded in 2006 by three propane industry professionals in response to a longtime colleague who fell to

prostate cancer. Today, the organization hosts events, fundraisers and advocates nationwide.

### ► THE MOTIVATION

At the 2005 Southeastern Convention, Ed Varney and Pat Hyland saw a dire need for the industry outside of propane.

“Bill McHenry was a well-known guy in the industry who passed away from prostate cancer,” says Ed Varney, chairman

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## TOP 10 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP PREVENT PROSTATE CANCER

- 1.** Eat less calories and exercise more often to maintain a healthy weight.
- 2.** Minimize the amount of fat you get from red meat and dairy products.
- 3.** Watch your calcium intake. Avoid taking more than 1,500 milligrams of calcium a day.
- 4.** Eat more fish.
- 5.** Try to incorporate cooked tomatoes with olive oil and cruciferous vegetables (like broccoli and cauliflower) into many of your weekly meals.
- 6.** Avoid smoking and limit alcohol consumption.
- 7.** Seek medical treatment for stress, high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol and depression.
- 8.** Avoid over-supplementation with megavitamins.
- 9.** Relax and enjoy life. Reducing stress in the workplace and at home will improve your survivorship and lead to a longer, happier life.
- 10.** If you are age 50 or over, age 40 or over and African American, or have a family history of prostate cancer, you need more than a good diet. You should consider a yearly rectal examination and PSA test, and discuss the risks and benefits of these screening procedures with your doctor.

Source: Prostate Cancer Foundation

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and co-founder of Pros4Care who works in business development at RegO. “[Hyland, now of the Propane Education & Research Council, and I] said we should do something like Susan G. Komen since the industry is predominantly men. We should really focus on this.”

On average, 1 in 9 men in the United States will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, with 6 in 10 of those cases being found in men older than 65, according to the Prostate Cancer Foundation (PCF). Prostate cancer is the leading type of non-skin cancer in the United States and the second-leading cause of cancer worldwide.

After McHenry’s battle with the disease, Varney and Hyland met with Bill Powers, the former president of Heritage Propane, to build an organization aimed at educating propane industry professionals about prostate cancer.

The three established Pros4Care in honor of McHenry with the mission of raising awareness, and emotionally and financially assisting patients through advocacy. The Pros4Care name was created to highlight “propane professionals promoting prostate health,” but the organization reaches beyond the propane industry and into the lives of many others.

“Our goal is to raise awareness and support patients any way we can,” Varney says. “We have expanded outside of the propane industry. It is now all-encompassing with people from all walks of life.”

Pros4Care is a nonprofit charity that is fully supported by volunteers. Its main source of funding is an annual golf tournament held every fall in McKinney, Texas, bringing together propane industry professionals, professional athletes, prostate cancer survivors and other advocates. The golf tournament is entering its 12th year as the cornerstone event hosted by Pros4Care with help from the Texas Propane Gas Association (TPGA).

“We provide attendees with statistics and the most recent treatments available,” Varney explains. “The main thing we talk about is people getting checked. The biggest thing out there is men who will not go get checked. It’s a cultural thing. We are trying to raise awareness and to raise the comfort level around testing.”

Despite Pros4Care’s success, Varney says the organization is planning to broaden its reach with events around the country.

“Our golf tournament is the primary fundraiser, but we are expanding and doing more,” Varney says. “We are based in Texas, but we are really a national organization. Now we have people interested in other states, so we are going to expand to other parts of the country.”

## ► RAISING AWARENESS

The No. 1 goal of Pros4Care is awareness, and the first step to protecting one’s health involves testing.

“The main thing is getting on top of this,” says Jim Thornton, a prostate cancer survivor and longtime supporter of Pros4Care. “Prostate cancer is a very treatable disease.”

The five-year survival rate in the United States for men diagnosed with prostate cancer is 99 percent, the PCF says, meaning the chance of dying from prostate cancer is generally low and the cancer is treatable.

“Getting checked can save your life,” says Art Howe, a former Major League Baseball player and manager, longtime prostate cancer awareness advocate and frequent attendee of Pros4Care events. “If you wait too long, prostate cancer can be devastating.”

Regular doctor visits and testing is key for men, especially for those over the age of 65 and in cases where the cancer has been

present in a relative. Although only about 1 in 350 men under the age of 50 will be diagnosed with the disease, the PCF says, the rate increases to 1 in 52 men for ages 50-59; 1 in 19 for ages 60 to 69; and 1 in 11 for men 70 and older.

“Pros4Care brings awareness,” says Jackie Mason of the TPGA and the Propane Council of Texas. “This is something that has touched people I know, and I think it shows people if it can happen to anyone it can happen to me, so don’t put those doctor visits off.” **LPG**

## KEY NUMBERS

# 52 percent

Since 1993, the death rate in men fighting prostate cancer has dropped 52 percent.

Source: Prostate Cancer Foundation

## SUPPORT PROS4CARE

For more information on Pros4Care or to donate to the cause, visit [pros4care.org](http://pros4care.org). To register for the 12th annual Pros4Care Golf Benefit on Oct. 14 at Stonebridge Country Club in McKinney, Texas, visit [pros4care12.eventbrite.com](http://pros4care12.eventbrite.com).

