

## PROSTATE HEALTH PIONEER

### Thomas E. Moody, MD

In 2006, the National Prostate Cancer Coalition graded states on how they were dealing with prostate cancer. Alabama received an “F.” Why? The state did not require insurance companies to cover prostate cancer screenings, too few men were getting screened, and the state’s death rate from prostate cancer was the third-highest in the country.

The grade “really bugged me,” says urologist Thomas E. Moody, MD, 64, whose Birmingham clinic is the largest urology practice in Alabama. “I immediately saw it as an opportunity and an obligation.”

Moody had already created a non-profit to educate physicians about prostate cancer. In 2006 he renamed it the Urology Health Foundation and changed its mission to promoting public awareness about the disease and providing statewide free screenings, especially in underserved communities. So far, Moody’s team has screened more than 3,500 men and found numerous cancers. “If we find a problem, we don’t just tell them to take care of it,” Moody says. “We help them.”

Moody also worked to get the state to pass a 2007 law requiring insurance companies to cover screenings. “Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of [cancer] death among U.S. men,” Moody says. “If we detect and treat it early, we can reduce the death rate. That’s why I’m a strong advocate for screening.”

Moody himself goes to most of the weekend screenings. He likes meeting people, especially in far-flung rural areas. “I don’t play golf well or much,” he adds modestly. “So this has become my hobby.”

Photograph by Rob Culpepper

