

Improving Process for Colon Cancer Screening

Purpose: To improve the rate of screening for colon cancer in 50-75 year-old patients

Background: It is well documented that screening for colon polyps and colon cancer reduces the risk of cancer and improves the outcomes of treatment of cancer when it is diagnosed. Improving patient education in why screening is advantageous and implementing processes to increase the rate of screening can lead to improving the outcomes of patients from the risk of colon cancer.

Strategies for Improvement:

- A. Focus on stool immunoassay kits instead of just colonoscopy for screening
 - 1. Multiple studies and USPSTF recognize equivalency between colonoscopy and stool testing annually
 - 2. Patients complete stool testing twice as often as colonoscopies
 - 3. Many uninsured patients cannot afford colonoscopy and many patients have a reticence to follow through with referral to a specialist
 - 4. When offered choice of colonoscopy and stool testing, overall rate of screening higher than offering only one choice
- B. Create standing orders for medical assistants, nurses, health coaches, and other team members to order and provide stool tests at any visit or by outreach efforts between visits
- C. Educate patients on how to complete stool tests
- D. Increase outreach to target population by email, text, phone, and mail to encourage screening
- E. Follow up of patients given stool kits until they return them with reminder letters, texts, emails, or calls
- F. Give responsibility for this measure to a specific individual or small team to push for improving results
- G. Track monthly results of this measure by provider, team, site, and organization wide to encourage improvement and test PDSAs of new processes

NOTE: Currently UDS recognizes only FIT and Hemocult tests in their measure of colon cancer screening. UDS does not currently recognize Cologuard, although it is anticipated that UDS will likely include Cologuard at some point. It is up to each health center to make its own decision for reporting purposes what stool tests to include.