

Colorectal Cancer Screening Promotion Program

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This material was developed through an Oregon Department of Human Services contract with Acumentra Health, Inc., funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Cooperative Agreement #5U58DP00789-02.

Colorectal Cancer Screening Promotion Program

Overview

The Colorectal Cancer Screening Promotion Program aims to assist primary care practices in working as a team to improve colorectal cancer (CRC) screening rates and reduce cancer incidence in Oregon. This program is an element of the statewide “Got Polyps?” campaign to save lives by increasing CRC screening—the #1 priority of the Oregon Partnership for Cancer Control. The theme of this campaign is “Preventable, treatable, beatable! The best test is the one that gets done!”

The National Colorectal Cancer Round Table has identified best practices for increasing screening rates:

- A recommendation from a physician or nurse practitioner to complete a CRC screening
- Patient education based on readiness for CRC screening (decision stage model)
- Modification of staff roles related to assessing and reminding patients
- Use of client reminder systems

To help practices implement these practices, this program focuses on preparing clinic staff to play a larger role in promoting CRC screening and encouraging follow-through.

Target audience for the program

This program leverages the strong relationships that medical assistants, nurses, and other clinic staff have with patients. Receiving recommendation for CRC screening from a physician, nurse practitioner, or other trusted clinic staff is a key factor in a patient's decision to schedule screening and follow through. Preparing your clinic staff to communicate effectively with patients about CRC risks and screening will increase the impact your practice can have on patients' preventive decisions.

The approach used in this toolkit will be most effective if the practice organizes a CRC screening promotion team to carry it out. See the section below titled “Implementation Essentials for the Screening Promotion Team” for key information on developing teamwork with new or enhanced staff roles.

Program structure

The program consists of two learning sessions for clinic staff:

Session 1: *Increase Knowledge About Screening* (approximately 1 hour)

This session provides knowledge about CRC and CRC screening, incorporating the most recent recommendations of the United States Preventive Services Task Force.

Session 2: *Increase Skills Needed to Impact Screening Rates* (approximately 1.25 hours)

This session provides tools and techniques for influencing patients and motivating them to complete CRC screening, drawing on approaches developed by the National Colorectal Cancer Round Table.¹ Participants will carry out a role play, using teaching tools, patient handouts, and scripted key messages to model productive interactions with patients.

¹ See Sarfaty M. *How to Increase Colorectal Cancer Screening Rates in Practice: A Primary Care Clinician's Evidence-Based Toolbox and Guide*. 2008 (NCCRT) <http://www.nccrt.org/Documents/General/IncreaseColorectalCancerScreeningRates.pdf>. Accessed August 11, 2009.

Program goals

The CRC Screening Promotion Program is designed to enable participating clinic staff to

1. Explain the value of colorectal cancer screening (Session 1)
2. Describe screening choices (Session 1)
3. Increase the number of patients in their practice who are screened for colorectal cancer (Session 2)

Materials

The program includes the following materials for each of the two learning sessions:

- A model agenda for the session
- A set of presentation slides
- Speaker notes with additional information keyed to the slides by number
- A pre/post test for participants, with an answer key
- A session evaluation form
- Tools and materials to support the learning objectives and activities:

Session 1

Colorectal Cancer Screening Guide
A reference tool to facilitate discussion with the patient during the office visit

Colorectal Cancer Screening Saves Lives!
A patient handout to encourage screening

Session 2

Scenario for a Role Play
Case, roles, goal, reference tools, discussion questions

Key Messages to Support Colorectal Cancer Screening Follow-through
Reference tool with sample positive messages, addressing fears, following up on tests not completed, sharing personal stories, assessing confidence in completion

Guide for Talking with Patients about Colorectal Cancer Screening
Reference tool on communication, including opener, “the pitch,” the decision stage model, and corresponding discussion points

A Decision Stage Model for Colorectal Cancer Screening
Diagram and algorithm used in the presentation

Materials were prepared using Office 2003 versions of Microsoft PowerPoint and Word.

Implementation Essentials for the Screening Promotion Team

To form a CRC Screening Promotion Team, you will need

- Agreement and enthusiasm among providers and the practice manager to pursue a team approach to CRC screening promotion
- Consensus on a general plan that addresses which clinic staff will comprise the promotion team and defines the goals, expectations, and staff roles
- A designated CRC promotion leadership team, which may include
 - clinical champion
 - one or more clinic staff (e.g., medical assistant and/or nurse, referral coordinator, scheduler)
 - manager
 - staff educator (e.g., clinical champion, lead nurse)

Before clinic staff begin or enhance their roles as CRC promoters, you will need

- Consensus on how primary care providers will identify average-risk and high-risk patients, as well as patients who should not be screened, and communicate the risk status to other members of the promotion team
- Consensus on screening recommendations for patients at average and higher risk of CRC, including alternatives for those with barriers to the practice's preferred protocol, formalized in a written protocol
- Printed instructions for colonoscopy and sigmoidoscopy preparation (developed by your practice or by the consultants)
- A physician standing order for screening
- Consensus on clinic teaching tools, key messages, and educational tools to facilitate effective clinic staff communication with patients about screening and preparation for screening
- Job descriptions that support new or enhanced staff roles

Getting optimal benefit from the team approach will require

- A practice team committed to improvement
- Good communication among staff and PCPs
- A system that supports identification of patients due and overdue for screening
- Alignment of the promotional “pitch” to the patient's decision stage and values
- Accountability and data sharing between PCPs and clinic staff
- A reminder/recall system that triggers effective communication with the patient

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