The UCCC COE Community-Based Colorectal Cancer Screening Project

University of Colorado Cancer Center
Office of Community Outreach & Engagement

By
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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Discuss COE background and aims
- Review COE approach to colorectal cancer screening and prevention
- Describe program implementation
- Detail program results, impact, and challenges
THE TEAM

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COE AIMS

• Monitor and disseminate up-to-date data on the cancer burden, risks, and disparities in the catchment (Colorado).

• Facilitate community-engaged research across scientific programs and clinical trial participation.

• Engage communities in the implementation and dissemination of interventions in cancer prevention, control and survivorship.
FOCUSING IN: COLORECTAL CANCER

• Colorectal cancer is the 3rd most common form of cancer in Colorado for Men and Women. It is also the 2nd leading cause of cancer death.¹

• Unlike other cancers, colorectal cancer is often preventable with screening and highly treatable when detected early.²

• Current guidelines recommend screening for those who are aged 45-75.

• FIT kits, or Fecal Immunochemical Test, are a cost-effective method for identifying the need for a colonoscopy.
• In pursuit of COE aims, we set out to:

  • Disseminate free colon cancer screening tests (FIT Kits) to un- and under-insured participants at 365 fairs (formally 9Health) across Colorado
  • Facilitate comprehensive follow-up and navigation to care for all participants in need of support.
DEVELOPING A PROGRAM WITH NEW PARTNERS

• The CU Cancer Center committed $50K to purchase up to 1000 FIT kits for eligible participants (for first year of program).

• Partnering with 365 health presented a unique opportunity for COE to disseminate an evidenced-based screening tool to individuals who may not otherwise have access to these tests throughout a statewide network of community driven health fairs.

• 365 partnership also provided diagnostic results from LabCorp.

• The target population for this program are un- or under-insured and/or un-documented adults living in Colorado who participate in one of the 365 fairs in 2023.
CHARTING A COURSE

• COE staff analyzed cancer disparity indexes to plan health fair attendance and optimize reach to medically underserved communities.

• Staff were trained in screening guidelines and education to engage participants and integrate screening processes into existing health fair workflow.
SO WHERE DID WE END UP?
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- Count of Participants: 6,331
- Received Colon Cancer Screening Kit Vouchers: 527
- Average Age: 64.36
FIT KITS RESULTS THUS FAR

• Of our 527 participants, 412 people were in the recommended age for colorectal cancer screening (45 - 75 years).

• Total Number of FIT Kits Returned: 134

• Positive: 22 – 16.4%

• Negative: 95 - 83.6%

• Key Takeaways: 134 out of 527 participants returned their kits. (21.8% return rate), all 22 positive participants have been offered navigation services.

• Higher positivity rate than similar program results with FIT Kits which often see <10% positivity.3, 4
**COMPREHENSIVE FOLLOW-UP & NAVIGATION**

- COE supported by practicum students who conducted follow-up to all 527 participants.

- Combination of text messaging and phone calls to encourage completion of FIT kits.

- Secured funding through the Colon Cancer Coalition & Colon Cancer Alliance supports colonoscopies with comprehensive navigation services provided to all.

- Our protocol for follow-up and navigation to care for all positive results aligns with new CO law, HB 1198, requiring hospitals to provide care for persons without insurance.
FOLLOW-UP RECEPTION

• Text messaging proved much more successful than phone calls.

• Practicum students logged a 45% return rate for text messaging!

• Follow-up is ongoing as plans for the coming health fair season pick up pace.
ADDITIONAL SERVICES

• COE took this opportunity to provide services and education on additional cancer topics:
  
  • We provided radon test kits, education, and follow-up.
  
  • Skin cancer prevention education and resources.
  
• COE also expanded outreach through existing partners such as the Colorado Black Health Collaborative and the Center for African American Health with plans to expand partnerships!
CHALLENGES

• A primary challenge for the UCCC COE team lies with the expectation to serve a large catchment area that covers the entire state of Colorado with limited staff and funding.

• Reducing time to follow-up was critical, systems in place initially delayed follow-up by a week or so and we pushed hard to reduce that as much as possible.

• There is still a ‘COVID fog’ that has reduced in person engagement at health fairs as well as general concern for cancer – people have a lot of other stressful concerns in life (housing, economy, mental health, substance misuse etc.)
**TAKE AWAYS**

- 365 Health partnership represents a cost-effective, labor conscious, innovative partnership allowing COE to engage with communities around the state on colorectal cancer screening for those experiencing high cancer disparities. It also allowed us to connect with portions of the population with the least amount of healthcare access and screening rates.
- Text messaging is a time-saving follow-up method that proved successful but phone calls are still important!
- Be prepared for lower return rates compared to programs where tests are paid for by participants.
- **Developing a comprehensive follow-up system is critical!**
IN THE END, IT'S ALL ABOUT ENGAGEMENT

COE was able to engage with communities across the state – an invaluable and critical part of our aims.
THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

Works Cited