



Improving Colorectal Cancer Screening Rates in North Dakota



Quality Health Associates
of North Dakota

Practical Policy

4 Essentials of Improving CRC Rates

Improve Cancer Screening Rates

USING THE FOUR ESSENTIAL STRATEGIES



Definitions

Bottom line, what is the message of a standing order?

We believe strongly that this screening test is so important that we want to assure that every single one of our patients who meet the screening criteria is offered the test.

- **Policy:** A deliberate system of principles to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes; it is a statement of intent and implemented as a procedure or protocol
- **Protocol:** Standard that includes general and specific principles for managing certain patient conditions
- **Standing Order:** Allow patient care to be shared among non-clinician members of the care team, such as medical assistants and nurses. Often based on national clinical guidelines but customized for the clinic's patient population and care environment.

From Opportunistic to Organized ...

1. An explicit policy with specified age categories, method, and interval for screening
2. A defined target population
3. A management team responsible for implementation
4. A healthcare team for decisions and care
5. A quality assurance structure
6. A method for identifying cancer occurrence in the population

What is Good Policy?

Template:

- ✓ Purpose
- ✓ Definitions
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Procedures
- ✓ References

Consider the following:

- National screening guidelines
- Realities of your practice
- Patient history and risk level
- Patient preferences and insurance coverage
- Local medical resources
- Include guidance for distribution, tracking and follow-up of take-home test (FIT/iFOBT)

Realities of your Practice

- Waiting room/exam rooms
- Patient Check-in
- During the Visit
- At Checkout
- Communication outside the office
- Tracking patient compliance

Why Standing Orders?

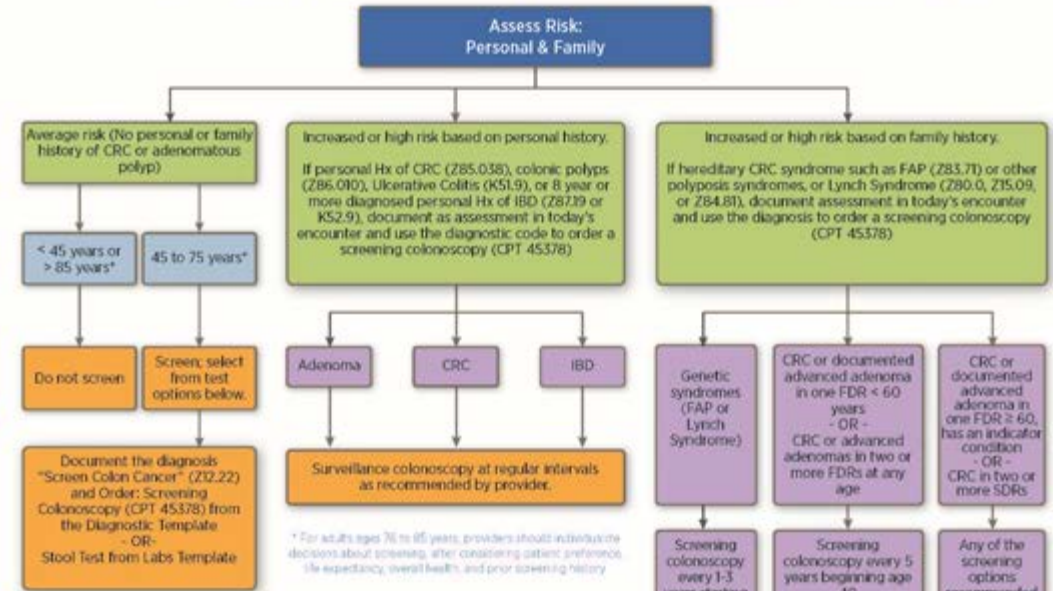
- Medical practice is demand (patient) driven
- Practice demands are numerous/diverse
- Few practices currently have mechanisms to assure that every eligible patient gets a recommendation for screening
- Screening rates are less for persons with less education, no health insurance, lower socio-economic status

Standing orders allow nursing staff or medical assistants to discuss CRC screening options, provide FOBT/FIT kits and instructions, and submit referrals for screening colonoscopy have been demonstrated to increase CRC screening rates.

<https://nccrt.org/resource/sample-risk-assessment-screening-algorithm/>

Sample Colorectal Cancer Screening Algorithm

Per the June 2021 USPSTF and May 2018 American Cancer Society Guidelines



SCREENING OPTIONS

Stool-Based Tests

- Yearly fecal immunochemical test (FIT)*, or
- Multi-target stool DNA (FIT-DNA) every three years, or
- Yearly high-sensitivity guaiac test (HS-gFOBT)*

* Stool samples obtained by digital rectal exam (DRE) have low sensitivity for cancer (missing 19 of 21 cancers in one study) and should **never be used for CRC screening**.

All patients who undergo a test other than colonoscopy as a first-line screening exam and receive a positive test result must follow up with a colonoscopy to complete the screening process.

Direct Visualization Tests

- Colonoscopy every 10 years, or
- CT colonography (virtual colonoscopy) every 5 years, or
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years

For Medicare patients, use G codes:

- G0105** - Colonoscopy (high risk)
- G0121** - Colonoscopy (not high risk)
- G0328** - Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT), immunoassay, 1-3 simultaneous
- G0464** - Colorectal cancer screening: stool-based DNA and fecal occult hemoglobin (e.g., KRAS, NDRG4 and BMP3)

DEFINITIONS

- IBD:** inflammatory bowel disease
- CRC:** colorectal cancer
- FDR:** first-degree relative
- SDR:** second-degree relative
- CTC:** computed tomographic colonography
- FAP:** familial adenomatous polyposis
- FIT:** fecal immunochemical test
- Hx:** history
- Screening colonoscopy** is performed on asymptomatic patients due for colorectal cancer screening because of age or familial risk indicators such as a family history of CRC or adenomatous polyps.
- Surveillance colonoscopy** is performed when a patient has an indicator condition or has had a personal malignancy or premalignancy that needs follow up and requires colonoscopy at more frequent intervals. Examples are Personal history of CRC (Z85.038) or Personal History of Colonic Adenomatous Polyps (Z86.010).
- Diagnostic colonoscopy** is performed when a patient has indicator condition requiring diagnostic workup that includes consideration of colon cancer as a potential diagnosis (i.e. persons with a history of rectal bleeding, anemia, or unexplained weight loss).
- An **advanced adenoma** is a lesion ≥ 1 cm in size or having high-grade dysplasia or villous elements.

5:2:1 Portfolio Approach

- Interventions that involve many components, **5** or more
= 40% more effective
Not just doing **5** interventions, but doing them well, every time, every patient
- Care that significantly involves at least **2** individuals (besides the patient) = 30% more effective
Who is owning responsibility?
- Processes that support and increase the patient's capacity for self care (**1**) = 30% more effective
Coach up!

Interventions:

Make a recommendation
Providing Screening Options
Provider Reminders
Patient Reminders
Tracking and follow-up
Patient Education
Health Coaching
Patient Navigation Services
Small Media/Health Messaging
Breaking down structural barriers

NO Digital Rectal Exam Samples!

Use of DRE to collect a stool sample should NEVER be used.

Missed 19 of 21 cancers in largest study

- Dr. Durado Brooks, ACS (2016)

No guidelines recommend FOBT obtained by digital rectal examination as an adequate colorectal cancer screening test.

- Thad Wilkins, MD/ Peter L. Reynolds, MD; AAFP.org (2010)

“Screening for colorectal cancer following digital rectal exam **is not recommended and should not be done.**”

- Ang et al., The diagnostic value of digital rectal examination in primary care for palpable rectal tumour, Colorectal Disease, Volume 10, Number 8, October 2008 (UK)

Stool samples obtained by digital rectal exam (DRE) have a low sensitivity for cancer ...an should **never** be used for CRC screening.

- ND Colorectal Cancer Roundtable

National Guidelines: Policy Updates

- **ACS**: May 30, 2018, released updated guidance to begin screening for colon and rectal cancer in average-risk adults at age 45.
 - [Colorectal cancer screening for average-risk adults: 2018 guideline update from the American Cancer Society - Wolf - 2018 - CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians - Wiley Online Library](#)
- **USPSTF**: Updated May 18, 2021, released updated guidance to begin screening at CRC in average risk adults at age 45.
 - <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/colorectal-cancer-screening>
- Impact on your policy in terms of EHR flags, parameters of reports, small media, messaging, patient reminders...

A provider's guide to colorectal cancer screening - NCCRT

Option to cobrand the flyer with your logo!

A PROVIDER'S GUIDE TO COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING



Do

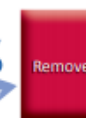
- ✓ **Do** make a recommendation! Be clear that screening is important. Ask patients about their needs and preferences. The best test is the one that gets done.
- ✓ **Do** use the American Cancer Society or the USPSTF recommendations for colorectal cancer screening in average-risk adults, starting no later than age 50.*
- ✓ **Do** assess your patient's family history, medical history, and age.
- ✓ **Do** be persistent with reminders.
- ✓ **Do** develop standard office operating procedures and policies for colorectal cancer screening, including the use of EHR prompts and patient navigation.

** The American Cancer Society recommends starting colorectal cancer screening at age 45, while the USPSTF recommends starting at 50. Patients under age 50 should talk to their insurance provider about their coverage.*

Don't

- ✗ **Do not** use digital rectal exams (DREs) for colorectal cancer screening. In 1 large study, DREs missed 19 of 21 cancers.
- ✗ **Do not** repeat a positive stool test. Any abnormal finding should be followed up with a colonoscopy.
- ✗ **Do not** use stool tests on those with a higher risk. A colonoscopy must be performed.
- ✗ **Do not** minimize or ignore symptoms in patients younger than screening age. Evaluate and refer symptomatic patients to colonoscopy as needed, regardless of age.
- ✗ **Do not** forget to use non-clinical staff to help make sure screening gets done. They can hand out educational materials and schedule follow-up appointments.
- ✗ **Do not** forget to coordinate care across the continuum.

For more tools and resources, please visit nccrt.org or contact Kelly Durden, Georgia Colorectal Cancer Roundtable (GCCRT) project manager, at kelly.durden@cancer.org.



Peer Sharing

- What key points in your policy would you recommend to others?
- Did you find weaknesses in your policy that you would like to improve on?

Review your initial assessment:
Consider addressing the gaps in your policy!

Part VI: Rescreening					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The clinic tracks when patients are due for regular CRC screening.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff ask about previous CRC screening if none are known or documented.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff have a process for obtaining past screening results if unknown.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Resources for the Journey Ahead

Resources

- [USPSTF: CRC Guidelines](#)
- ScreenND.org:
 - ICC Screening Toolkit
 - QHA CRC Screening Policy Example
 - Sample Screening Algorithm from NCCRT
 - A Providers Guide to Colorectal Cancer Screening

Next Steps

- Action Plan: Policy Development or Review
- Evaluation (required for CEUs):
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ScreenDModule2101221>

**Next collaborative call: November 9,
1:00 pm CT /12 MT | Topic: Matter of
Choice**

ScreenND Contact Information

Nikki Medalen, MS, BSN

Quality Improvement Specialist

nmedalen@qualityhealthnd.org | 701-989-6236

Jonathan Gardner

Network Administrator/Data Analyst

jgardner@qualityhealthnd.org | 701-989-6237