According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), colorectal cancer (CRC) is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. As many as 60 percent of these deaths could be prevented with proper screening. Yet, one in three adults are not being screened.

The lifetime risk for developing CRC is one in 20, and incidence rates have been decreasing for the past two decades, which has been largely attributed to increased screening. Our goal, as QIOs, is to improve CRC screening in patients ages 50-75 to continue these decreases. Since March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, this Cardiac Beat Special Edition offers examples of what QIOs have done to impact change in their states and lists partners, tools and resources for your QIO to use.

QIOs in Action

Alabama Quality Assurance Foundation (AQAF) Partners with CRC Roundtable Coalition, Helps Detect CRC

AQAF, AL – AQAF is a member of the Alabama Colorectal Cancer Roundtable Coalition, comprised of Alabama stakeholders and partners who volunteer their services to assist the Department of Public Health’s FITway Campaign. The FITway Campaign aims to increase screening to 80% statewide among 50-75 year-olds, increase awareness of detection and prevention procedures, and make screening more accessible. Through the partnership, AQAF has provided expertise in ambulatory care practices, healthcare information technology, state screening rates, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) initiatives and healthcare provider feedback. They have used FITway resources to send out over 10,000 reminder postcards, 1,200 patient reminder letters, and 800 prepaid FIT collection kits to patients at their recruited practices. The latter resulted in 132 returned collection kits with 37 positive results, which helped with early detection and prevention of CRC, as well as promoted the advanced use of the practices’ Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems. Click here to learn more.

Quality Insights Provider Success Story: Early Detection of CRC Made Easier with an EHR

Quality Insights, DE – Dr. Domingo G. Aviado is a solo-practitioner in Milford, DE who has been using an EHR system in his practice since 2001. The practice participated in the Quality Insights of Delaware’s Prevention Program, which focused on implementing an EHR to generate reports for certain health screening statistics of the practice, such as CRC screenings, mammography reports, and influenza vaccination for each month during a twelve month period. These reports were then used to more closely monitor and recommend routine preventive screenings for Dr. Aviado’s patients. Read the full story here.

South Dakota QIO Partners with Statewide CRC Council

South Dakota Foundation for Medical Care, SD – The SD QIO is an active member of The South Dakota Comprehensive Cancer Control–CRC workgroup. The workgroup’s focus is to promote the prevention and early detection of CRC in the state. It is one of six workgroups formed to address specific issues related to implementation of the South Dakota Cancer Plan. Member agencies include the American Cancer Society, South Dakota Department of Health, South Dakota Urban Indian Health, GetScreenedSD Program and Northern Plains Comprehensive Cancer Control Program. The CRC workgroup publishes a quarterly newsletter for GetScreenedSD provider groups and stakeholder groups. In the February 2013 issue, the article “Small Changes Make Big Difference in Screening Rates,” Jaime Haefner, RN and workgroup member, shares her experience and actions to improve CRC screenings within her community, specifically a SD Urban Indian
Health Clinic. Go here to view the newsletter.

STRATIS Health Promotes Colon Health Awareness in Newsletter

Stratis Health, MN – Stratis Health promoted colon health in their monthly Clinic Link e-newsletter sent to physician offices. The latest issue provides tips on how to help patients become more aware of colon health, how to encourage screening, and links to ways to improve screening rates. Go here to view this latest edition and subscribe to future editions.

CRC Partners

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – The CDC’s multiyear, multimedia Screen for Life: National Colorectal Cancer Action Campaign informs men and women aged 50 years and older about the importance of having regular colorectal cancer screening tests. It includes public service announcements with celebrities, campaign messages, educational materials, partnerships and campaign research links. Learn more here.

National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable (NCCRT) – The Roundtable, established by the American Cancer Society (ACS) and the CDC in 1997, is a national coalition of public, private and voluntary organizations and invited individuals dedicated to reducing the incidence of and mortality from colorectal cancer in the U.S., through coordinated leadership, strategic planning and advocacy. The ultimate goal of the Roundtable is to increase the use of proven CRC screening tests among the entire population for whom screening is appropriate. Click here to learn more and access tools and resources.

National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (NCCCP) – Comprehensive cancer control (CCC) is a collaborative process through which a community and its partners pool resources to reduce the burden of cancer. The CDC supports cancer control programs in 50 states, the District of Columbia, seven tribes and tribal organizations, and seven U.S. Associated Pacific Islands/territories. These CCC programs are working in their communities to promote healthy lifestyles and recommended cancer screenings, educate people about cancer symptoms, increase access to quality cancer care, and enhance cancer survivors’ quality of life. Learn more here.

American Cancer Society – The ACS provides a wealth of information about CRC. Consumers can learn about prevention, treatment and research, as well as facts and myths about CRC. The ACS also provides videos and access to online support communities. Go here to view their CRC webpage and variety of resources.

CRC in the News

Clinical Screening Program Developed for No.1 Genetic Cause of Colon Cancer

Cancer Rates Dropping Among Black Americans

Too Much Sitting May Lower Odds of Surviving Colon Cancer

Big Drop in Colon Cancer Attributed to Colonoscopy

Studies Show Effectiveness of Colon Screenings with Easier Preparation

Report Tracks Growing Population of Cancer Survivors in the U.S.

CRC Screenings Increase When Patients Given Options
QIO Toolkits
The following toolkits have been created by QIOs and are available online:

Health e-Tools: Colorectal Cancer Screenings, Quality Insights, DE – includes resources, suggested Tweets and education for healthcare professionals

Colorectal Cancer Screening Toolkit, Acumenra Health, OR – includes educational modules and materials for clinic staff, provider and community

Cancer Screenings Toolkit, MetaStar, WI – includes tools and resources for providers and patients from MetaStar and other organizations

Colorectal Cancer Toolkit, Ohio KePro – offers links to booklets, brochures, videos, fact sheets, provider resources and more

Additional Resources
Clinical Guidelines: Screening for Colorectal Cancer, IHPC NCC (PowerPoint available for download in the QIO Resource Center under 10th SoW Tools and Resources)

Messaging and Media Tips for National CRC Awareness Month: March 2013, CRISP NCC (Available for download from Healthcare Communities)

How to Increase Colorectal Cancer Screening Rates in Practice, NCCRT

Colorectal Cancer, CDC Vital Signs

Family Health Tree & Dress in Blue, Colon Cancer Alliance

Colon Cancer, PubMed

Colon and Rectal Cancer, National Cancer Institute

Recommendations for Colorectal Cancer Screening, United States Preventive Services Task Force

Health Observances
Cancer Awareness Calendar 2013
This ACS calendar offers a comprehensive list of all health observances related to cancer awareness.