

Title: Adaptation of the Flu-FIT Program for Patient Aligned Care Teams

Authors:

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Background:

The overall East Orange VA (EOVA) colorectal cancer screening rate as of September 2019 was 77%. Multiple approaches are needed to increase colorectal cancer screening (CRCS). The flu-FIT program, a prevention visit that includes influenza immunization and CRCS, was piloted as a quality improvement project during the 2018-2019 influenza season with a resulting increase in CRCS rates of 9% for two primary care teams. The objective is to adapt and evaluate Flu-FIT at the East Orange VA (EOVA) to increase CRCS over the 82% national screening average for six primary care teams.

Methods:

During the 2019-2020 season, the program will be implemented for six primary care teams at the EOVA. FIT kits are offered to eligible patients with scheduled flu vaccine visits from October 2019- March 2020. Eligibility was determined based on USPSTF guidelines. The VA electronic records and VA Datawarehouse identify patients not up to date with CRCS. A list of eligible patients is provided monthly to the nursing staff. Screening rates for this patient group will be compared with other primary care teams that followed the standard of care for CRCS.

Results:

During the month of October, the project included 60 patients. The average age for patients was 65 years old, 58 (97%) were male. Patients were unevenly distributed between the six primary care teams with one team representing 30% of patients for the month of October. Primary care sites not participating in the project had a total of 365 patients, of which 81% were male and had an average age of 64 years old. These are preliminary results; final results are forthcoming.

Conclusion:

The Flu-FIT Program is practical to implement at VA primary care clinics to increase CRCS rates among eligible Veteran patients during the influenza season.

Public Health Implications:

Bundling preventive services that are repeated in similar intervals may increase rates among patients that are receptive to one measure.