



Colon Cancer Fast Track Screening Program

Six different Northwell Health departments joined forces to develop a fast track program aimed at increasing the rate of colonoscopies among average risk Northwell Health employees 50+.

About Northwell Health

Northwell Health is New York's largest private employer and health care provider, with 23 hospitals and nearly 800 outpatient facilities. Dedicated to cancer prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, research and survivorship, Northwell Health Cancer Institute seamlessly integrates Northwell's world-class hospitals, innovative treatments and leading cancer specialists of every kind.

Challenge

Colon and rectal cancers are the second leading cause of cancer related death (combined) in the U.S. and are highly preventable.

Solution

Members from Northwell Health's Gastroenterology, Employee Wellness, NetworkCare, Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research, Long Island Jewish Medical Center and Human Resources departments joined forces to develop and pilot the Colon Cancer Fast Track Screening Program. The main goal was to increase colonoscopy uptake among average risk Northwell employees aged ≥ 50 years.

In the 5 pilot locations, there were approximately 12,500 Northwell employees over the age of 50. Based on incidence rates, approximately 600 of these employees were expected to develop colorectal cancer in their lifetime and approximately 500 of these cases could be prevented with screening.

Northwell employees do not require a pre-authorization for in-system care on the Northwell benefit plan and they get a credit for performing select wellness actions such as getting a colonoscopy. In addition, Northwell's Vivo Pharmacy was able to cover the colonoscopy prep.

A dedicated fast track screening phone number was established (833-3MY-COLON). The line was answered by a clinician that determined eligibility through a telephonic risk assessment and classified employees as average or high risk. The fast track program streamlined the scheduling process by eliminating the need for an average risk patient to meet with a gastroenterologist for a pre-procedure consultation; they simply came in on the day of their procedure. The clinician offered to coordinate a gastroenterology consult for employees who met high risk criteria. Patients received a call after their procedure to assess satisfaction, answer survey questions, address any questions or obtain any needed referrals.

The fast track screening program resulted in a 3.4% increase in colonoscopy procedures.