NYC Community Cares Project
Increasing Colonoscopy Screening for Uninsured New Yorkers

The NYC Health Department’s NYC Community Cares Project helps facilitate partnerships between Ambulatory Surgical Centers (ASCs) and primary care centers such as Community Health Centers (CHCs) to provide all aspects of colonoscopy screenings (anesthesia, procedure, pathology) FREE of charge to uninsured patients referred from primary care sites. This collaboration leverages synergies resulting from the implementation of the patient-centered medical home (PCMH) and Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) quality improvement strategies, providing a unique opportunity to improve colorectal cancer screening rates and tackle persisting health disparities.

Background
Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the second leading cause of cancer death in NYC.1 As a CRC screening tool, colonoscopy detects cancer early and prevents it by removing adenomas, which are a type of precancerous polyp.2

Since 2003 NYC has made significant strides in colonoscopy screening trends:
• A large increase in screening rate from 42% in 2003 to 72% in 2020, shown in the line graph to the left.
• A reduction in screening inequalities by income.

Latest Outcomes: From August 2013 through August 2021, a total of 9,686 uninsured patients have been referred for colonoscopy and 4,878 have completed screening. Of those, 1,501 patients had adenomas removed, meaning that up to 1,501 cases of cancer were potentially averted.

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