



NEWS RELEASE

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Colorectal cancer screening improvement efforts earn national recognition

Great Plains Quality Innovation Network honored during National Colorectal Cancer Awareness kick-off event

Topeka, Kan. – The Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, Inc. (KFMC), a not-for-profit organization based in Topeka, KS, recently earned national recognition for efforts to improve colorectal cancer screening rates. KFMC is a member of the Great Plains Quality Innovation Network, the Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO) serving Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota. The Great Plains QIN was chosen by the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable (NCCRT) to receive the 2017 80% by 2018 National Achievement Honoree Award. This prestigious national honor recognizes leadership in the ongoing effort to increase colorectal cancer screening rates across the United States. Following a competitive review of nominees, Great Plains QIN was chosen as one of six organizations from across the country to be recognized for their dedication of time, talent and expertise to advancing initiatives that support the shared goal to regularly screen 80% of adults age 50 and over by 2018.

Co-founded by the American Cancer Society and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the NCCRT is chaired by Dr. Richard Wender, chief cancer control officer for the American Cancer Society. "We are moving full speed ahead in our efforts to reach an ambitious public health goal: an 80% colorectal cancer screening rate by 2018. Fortunately, we have boots on the ground working every day to reach this goal. Their work is relentless, their successes are enormous, and I'm confident that they are saving lives," Wender stated.

Great Plains QIN Chief Executive Officer Tina Georgy considered the success a regional effort, "Partnering with stakeholders from across the four-state region increased awareness of the value of colorectal cancer screening. The collective effort of stakeholders and staff providing education and support resulted in increased screening rates and the expansion of the innovative FluFIT program into a variety of settings, including federally qualified health centers (FQHC), Indian Health Service clinics and pharmacy sites."

To be recognized for this honor, Great Plains QIN facilitated a regional Learning and Action Network, a collaborative effort focused on the importance of colorectal cancer screenings. Education and training was offered as well as technical assistance to support evidence-based systems change interventions at 57 clinics, 17 of which are Kansas practices. Of the 43

clinics currently able to track their screening rates, all have reported improvements; one Kansas practice, Prairie Star Family Practice in Plainville, Kansas, screened as many as 84% of eligible patients.

Sarah Irsik-Good, Director of Quality Improvement at KFMC, reflected on the achievement of Prairie Star Family Practice, “We are very excited that one of our Kansas practices has already achieved the 80% screening goal well ahead of the 2018 mark! We are working to harness their success, promising practices and lessons learned to help other practices improve by providing a model that has proven to work in the rural Kansas healthcare environment.”

Dr. Jen Brull, physician owner of Prairie Star Family Practice, recently presented their improvement journey to participating practices across the four state Great Plains region and shared the following about their success, “One of my passions is performance improvement, so the process of improving our colon cancer screening rate is one that is interesting to me at base. The benefit to my patients of earlier detection is one I strongly support and love to tell patients about. I suspect my enthusiasm for both contributes to my team's success at getting patients screened.”

Collaborations with a diverse group of healthcare organizations across the region raise awareness of the value and options for colorectal cancer screening. Shannon Bacon, health systems manager for the Great West Division of the American Cancer Society remarked, “Great Plains QIN has been a vital partner in improving colorectal cancer screening rates across their four-state region. Staff expertise, leadership and willingness to collaborate with other organizations have resulted in more people being screened for colorectal cancer. I truly believe that lives will be saved as a result of their success.”

The NCCRT hosted honorees, including Great Plains QIN team members, for a recognition event to kick off National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month on March 1 in New York City's Times Square. Find the full list of 2017 80% by 2018 National Achievement Award winners and detailed information on the NCCRT at <http://nccrt.org>.

About Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, Inc.

The Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, Inc. (KFMC) is a not-for-profit organization focused on improving healthcare quality. KFMC is a member of the Great Plains Quality Innovation Network, the Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO) serving Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota. KFMC is also the Regional Extension Center (REC) and External Quality Review Organization (EQRO) for the state of Kansas. In addition, we contract with many private companies to provide health information technology (HIT) consulting services, quality improvement and review services. Throughout various contracts, our role is to work with healthcare providers and organizations to develop ways to improve the use of HIT and the quality of healthcare provided to all Kansas healthcare consumers. To learn more, visit kfmc.org.

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