

Strategies for Establishing Relationships and Referrals with GI Practices

Dr. Timothy Cannon

Inova Schar Cancer Institute

The Danger of Colon Cancer

- Over 55,000 deaths per year in the United States.
- Over 130,000 cases of colorectal cancer per year in the United States.
- 6% of Americans will be affected.
- 76-90% of colon cancers could be prevented by colonoscopies or other recommended screening procedures.
- Only 35% of American adults 50 or older have had a colonoscopy.



San Juan Hospital

Where do patient receive the recommendations.

- Physicians (Internists, Family physicians, Geriatricians).
- Community Outreach Efforts (Senior Centers, Worship Centers, Health Fairs, Libraries).
- Employers (Employee Health Bulletins, Insurance Forms)

Barriers to smooth transition from referral sources to colonoscopy.

- Patient Reluctance.
- The time required for arranging colonoscopy.
- A dispersed medical system.
- Lack of resources for low income patients.

Methods

- Nurse navigators.
- Direct Endoscopy Referral Center (no “pre-appointment”).
- With these 2 interventions, compliance improved 3-fold in Lincoln County, NYC.



Peer Navigators



- Idea originates in the reluctance of certain cultures to accept colonoscopies.
- Professional navigators were no less effective than peer navigators, but both are very effective (Jandorf et al., 2014).

Full Service Cancer Screening Clinics

- Patients receive all screening in one place at one time.
- Not common in the United States.
- Structure of our medical system, with it's many stakeholders, not conducive to this type of clinic.

Practical Solutions

- Community Outreach.
- Promotion of streamlined connections between primary care physicians and gastroenterology practices.
- Consideration of Direct Referral Systems.
- Expansion of gastroenterology services among the indigenous.