Summary

MPRO is a nonprofit organization comprised of healthcare professionals and consultants committed to improving the quality, safety and efficiency of healthcare. MPRO's colorectal cancer (CRC) project engages practices in implementing evidence-based interventions to prevent and support early detection of cancer. One such practice’s screening rate exhibited an absolute improvement of 41.47 percent.

Evidence Based Interventions (EBIs)

MPRO focused on the following EBIs:

Provider Reminders:
- Technical support focused on activation and utilization of clinical decision support (CDS) alerts in practices' electronic health record (EHR) systems.

Provider Assessment and Feedback:
- Practices submitted data to MPRO regularly; data was aggregated into spreadsheets which tracked data on provider, practice, and group levels and was then used to show screening rate trends and create benchmark reports.

Client Reminders:
- Centered on identifying existing client reminder systems, types of reminders being used, responsible staff, and reminder schedules.

Challenges

While working with one practice, the EHR system was not populating numerators for quality measures. CDS alerts were enabled to indicate eligibility for CRC screening, but staff were frequently closing out of notifications without reading them. This practice also used outdated testing - in addition to referring to colonoscopy services, this practice supplied eligible individuals with Hemoccult II FOBTs, which is no longer a recommended screening test.

Solutions

MPRO consultants and practice staff were able to trace data issues in the EHR quality measure portal back to how CRC screening test results were being entered. By working with the EHR vendor and practice staff, MPRO was able to guide future data entry, as well as, establish a quarterly system for screening rate review. For CDS alerts, MPRO educated clinical staff on current guidelines for CRC screening and follow-up. MPRO also emphasized the importance of engaging with alerts as they appear.

Successes

In the beginning, this practice’s baseline screening was at 0 percent. Following technical assistance, patients who completed screening began to populate and rates increased to 41.47 percent. As EHR issues were resolved, we saw an increase in CDS alert utilization. MPRO encouraged involvement from multiple care team members. As a result, the practice’s staff gained a better understanding of CRC screening guidelines and EHR functionality.

Sustaining the Success

Working with MDHHS, we discussed how to change the testing kits to those that are evidence-based. MPRO will offer support to clinical staff to ensure adherence to screening guidelines. MPRO will work with staff on refining their client reminder system. By understanding patients’ preferred modes of communication and language, reminders can be tailored to patients. As the accuracy of quality measures improves, MPRO will aim for 82.29 percent of eligible patients completing CRC screening.

Results

This practice and MPRO set a goal to achieve a 10 percent absolute improvement in their CRC screening rate; this practice increased CRC screening rates from 0 to 41.47 percent.