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Reducing Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening

Colon cancer is the second most common cause of cancer death (mortality) in men and women combined in Kentucky, as well as the United States. Over 2,600 cases of colon cancer are diagnosed in Kentucky each year, with more than half of those cases diagnosed at a late stage. When detected early, the 5-year survival rate for colon cancer is more than 90%. At least 60% of colon cancer deaths could be prevented altogether with regular screenings.

In order to reduce structural barriers to colorectal cancer screening, this effort has focused on several key areas:

- [Kentucky Colon Cancer Screening Program](#) (KCCSP) is a population-based, public health initiative consisting of a network of state, regional and local health professionals whose mission is to reduce new cases of colon cancer as well as the disability and death associated with colon cancer. **KCCSP focuses on increasing access to colon cancer screening for the uninsured**
 - The Kentucky Colon Cancer Screening Act (HB 415) was signed into law on April 15, 2008, becoming the Kentucky Colon Cancer Screening Program (KRS 214.540-544).
 - The law established a colon cancer screening program within the Kentucky Department of Public Health to provide screening services to uninsured individuals age 50 to 64 and others at high risk. The bill was passed without funding.
 - In May of 2010, Governor Beshear added to the 2008 statute by signing a measure permitting the Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) to establish an income-based fee scale for colon cancer screenings if state funding becomes available. The legislation also established the Colon Cancer Screening Program Fund, which may accept state general fund appropriations, as well as funds from any state, federal or private source. The bill was also re-named in honor of Richard "Butch" Stewart, a long-time employee of the Kentucky General Assembly who died from colon cancer.
 - On June 4, 2010 legislators allocated \$50,000 of coal severance tax dollars to each of four eastern Kentucky counties for use towards "colon cancer screening/care". The money was earmarked in the budget bill (House Bill 1 Senate Committee Substitute) to go directly to the county health departments in Floyd, Letcher, Martin and Pike counties.
 - On March 30, 2012, the Governor Beshear's proposed budget passed the Senate 36-1 and the House 81-7. The budget included \$1 million dollars for colon cancer screening for the uninsured, to be matched by the Kentucky Cancer Foundation. It is estimated that 4,000 Kentuckians will receive screening from this investment in the state's health.
 - On March 31, 2014, the Kentucky General Assembly once again passed a budget (proposed by Governor Beshear) that included \$1 million dollars for colon cancer screening for the uninsured, to be matched by the Kentucky Cancer Foundation
- **Providing technical support and educational opportunities** to partners, providers and the public regarding policy, systems and environmental changes through KCC staff and a contract with the Colon Cancer Prevention Project. This included:
 - Physician recommendation for colon cancer screening
 - Health Literacy
 - Access to Screening
 - Working with the Kentucky Cancer Program Regional Cancer Control Specialists to develop and conduct presentations on reducing structural barriers for colon cancer screening to their District Cancer Council Networks
 - [Resource Plan](#) that provides data on the cost of treatment vs. screening and colon cancer burden
 - Consultation and technical support to the KCCSP Advisory Committee including media and communication planning
- **Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Cancer**
 - One of the focus areas for the ACA and Cancer Team is colon cancer screening
 - Resources have been developed for health professionals and the public
 - [ACA and Cancer Detailed Public Version](#)
 - [ACA and Cancer Health Professionals Version](#)
 - The ACA and Cancer Team is currently working on an FAQ for health professionals that will help clarify what is specifically needed to keep colon cancer screening from having a co-pay or deductible for patients
- **Understanding barriers to colon cancer screening in Kentucky**
 - Drs. Jennifer Redmond Knight (KCC), Sarojini Kanotra (Kentucky BRFSS) and

Cancer Action Plan



The Kentucky Cancer Action Plan (CAP) is the state's comprehensive cancer control plan to reduce our burden of cancer. The Kentucky Cancer Consortium is charged with implementing the CAP. The Plan is a blueprint for action that addresses four key areas of the cancer continuum: prevention, early detection, treatment and care, and quality of life. Each section contains major goals, objectives, and suggested strategies.

In 1999, the Kentucky Cancer Program, the Kentucky Department for Public Health, and the American Cancer Society developed the plan with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The first Kentucky Cancer Action Plan was completed in 2001. Revisions are made as needed. The Plan's last complete revision was approved by the Consortium in 2005.

Download [the entire plan](#), or just one of the sections: [prevention](#), [screening and early detection](#), [treatment and care](#), or [quality of life](#).

colleagues published a journal article in Preventing Chronic Disease looking at a state-added question related to barriers to colon cancer screening.

- [Redmond Knight J, Kanotra S, Siameh S, Jones J, Thompson B, Thomas-Cox S. Understanding Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening in Kentucky. Prev Chronic Dis 2015;12:140586.](#)
- **Reducing cost barriers to colon cancer screening**
 - On March 24th, Governor Beshear signed a bill to amend existing legislation related to health insurance coverage* of colon cancer screening
 - This legislation ensures the coverage of "complete colon cancer screening" based on American Cancer Society Guidelines without a co-pay or deductible. Two examples that apply to this legislation include:
 - Polyp removal during a screening colonoscopy
 - Follow-up colonoscopy for a positive Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)

*Please note that those who have Medicare or who have a self-funded employer may still be responsible for a co-pay or deductible

Links of Interest

- [Colon Cancer Prevention Project](#)
- ["All Jokes Aside" Steve Harvey Video](#), provided through the American Cancer Society. A 5-minute video diary of the comedian as he undergoes a colonoscopy. The video aims to inform, inspire, and encourage African American men and women to take charge of their health.
- [Affordable Care Act: Colorectal Cancer Screening](#)
- [CDC Sponsored CME program on Screening for Colon Cancer](#): This continuing education activity provides guidance and tools for clinicians on the optimal ways to implement screening for colorectal cancer to help ensure that patients receive maximum benefit. There are two versions of this course: one for primary care providers and one for clinicians who perform colonoscopy.

For more information on KCC's Policy, Systems and Environmental Change efforts around barriers to colon cancer screening, contact Andrea Shepherd, KCC Colon Cancer Policy Coordinator and Executive Director of the Colon Cancer Prevention Project, at ashepherd@c2p2ky.org



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