

Developing colorectal cancer screening champions yields huge return on investment (ROI).

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Background

Established in 1978, Little River Medical Center (LRMC) is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) located in Horry County, South Carolina (Myrtle Beach area). Our health center provides a wide array of services including medical primary care, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, laboratory, radiology, women's health/family planning, HIV care, WIC, Parents as Teachers, and Community Outreach. LRMC operates 6 clinics and serves a diverse population including a large percentage of patients who are low income, uninsured, homeless, migrant workers, and/or transient (snowbirds).

LRMC is a partnering system for the SC Communities Unite to Increase Colorectal Cancer project (SC Unite). This project is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The project's goal is to increase participation in colorectal cancer screening (CRCS) by implementing evidence-based interventions (EBIs) to improve health care processes. SC Unites is a collaboration with the Colorectal Cancer Prevention Network (CCPN) and the American Cancer Society (ACS) to enhance learning opportunities using comprehensive technical assistance (TA). In addition, the project collaborates with the South Carolina Primary Healthcare Association (SCPHCA) and Center for Applied Research and Evaluation (CARE), to support data analytics and evaluation related to CRCS performance.

Objective

LRMC's South Strand was a low performing clinic for CRCS. The goal was to increase overall performance in patient referrals and completion for CRCS.

Methods

As part of SC Unite, LRMC committed to identifying clinic level CRCS champions to encourage and promote awareness. LRMC identified Jennifer Haynes, FNP for South Strand and encouraged her to work within the site to increase CRCS rates. To support these efforts, Jennifer attended the QI Boot Camp in December 2020 where she received training and tools. Additionally, she attended monthly TA sessions.

Discussion

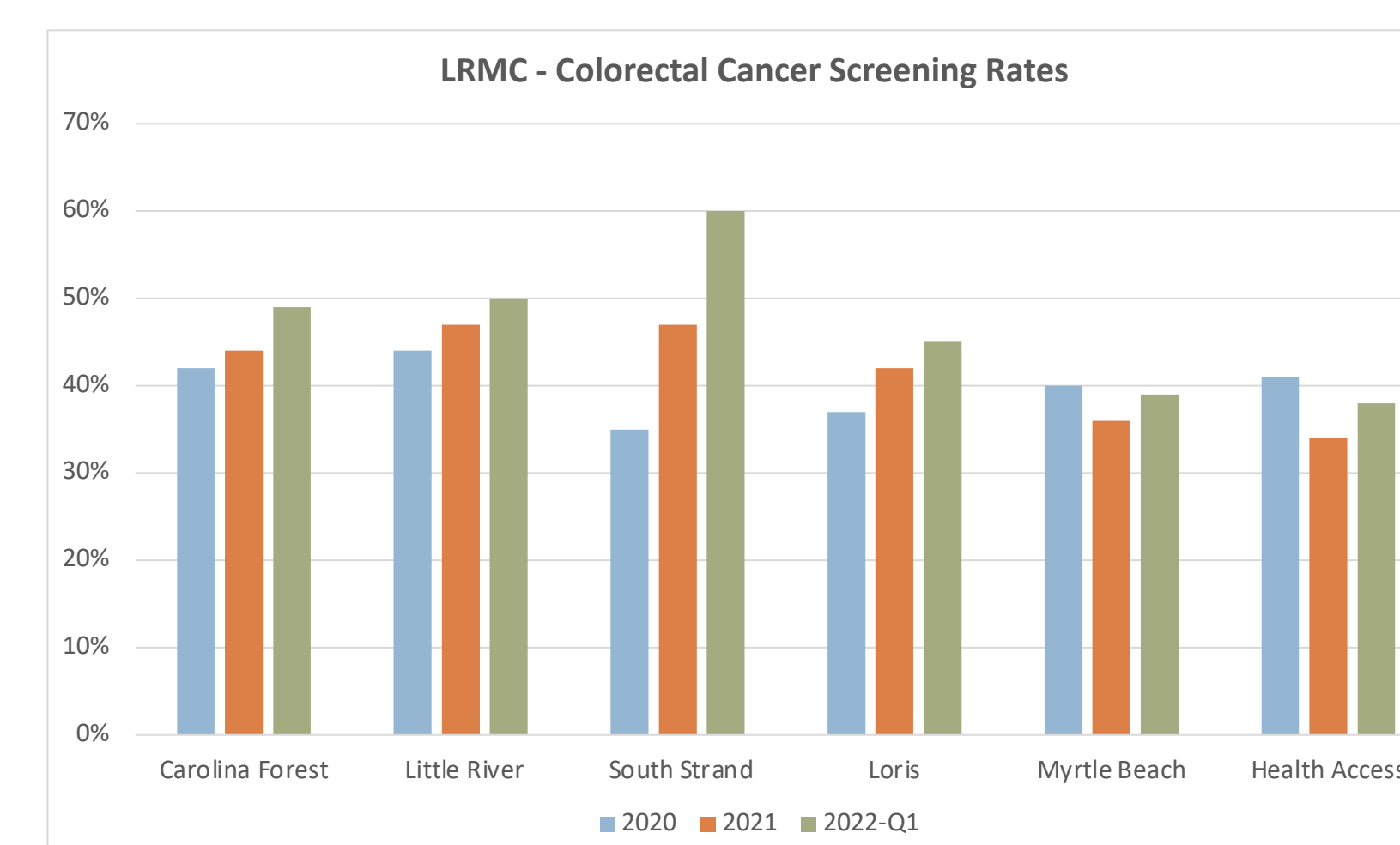
Jennifer Haynes, FNP used tools and resources from QI Boot Camp to lead the South Strand project team in developing an AIM statement, defining a plan on how the site would reach their CRCS goal. Additionally, she participated in root cause analysis, and based on outcomes assisted the team in selecting EBIs to enhance the sites CRCS process. EBIs selected were provider reminder, patient reminder, and provider assessment and feedback. Jennifer led her team through PDSA cycles to test the effectiveness of implementing the use of the Azara pre-visit planning report in morning huddles (Provider Reminder). South Strand's process improvement included Jennifer coordinating with lab personnel to distribute FIT kits to patients coming in for labs and instructing patient to return the FIT kit the following week during their scheduled provider visit. Additionally, open lab reports identified patients needing a follow-up call to return their FIT or COLOGUARD kit (Patient Reminder). The QI leadership team provides monthly CRCS performance reports by provider team (Provider Assessment and Feedback). Quarterly, CRCS provider awards (poop trophies) are announced for having a CRCS rate of 50% or more. These awards are published in the LRMC employee newsletter.



Acknowledgements

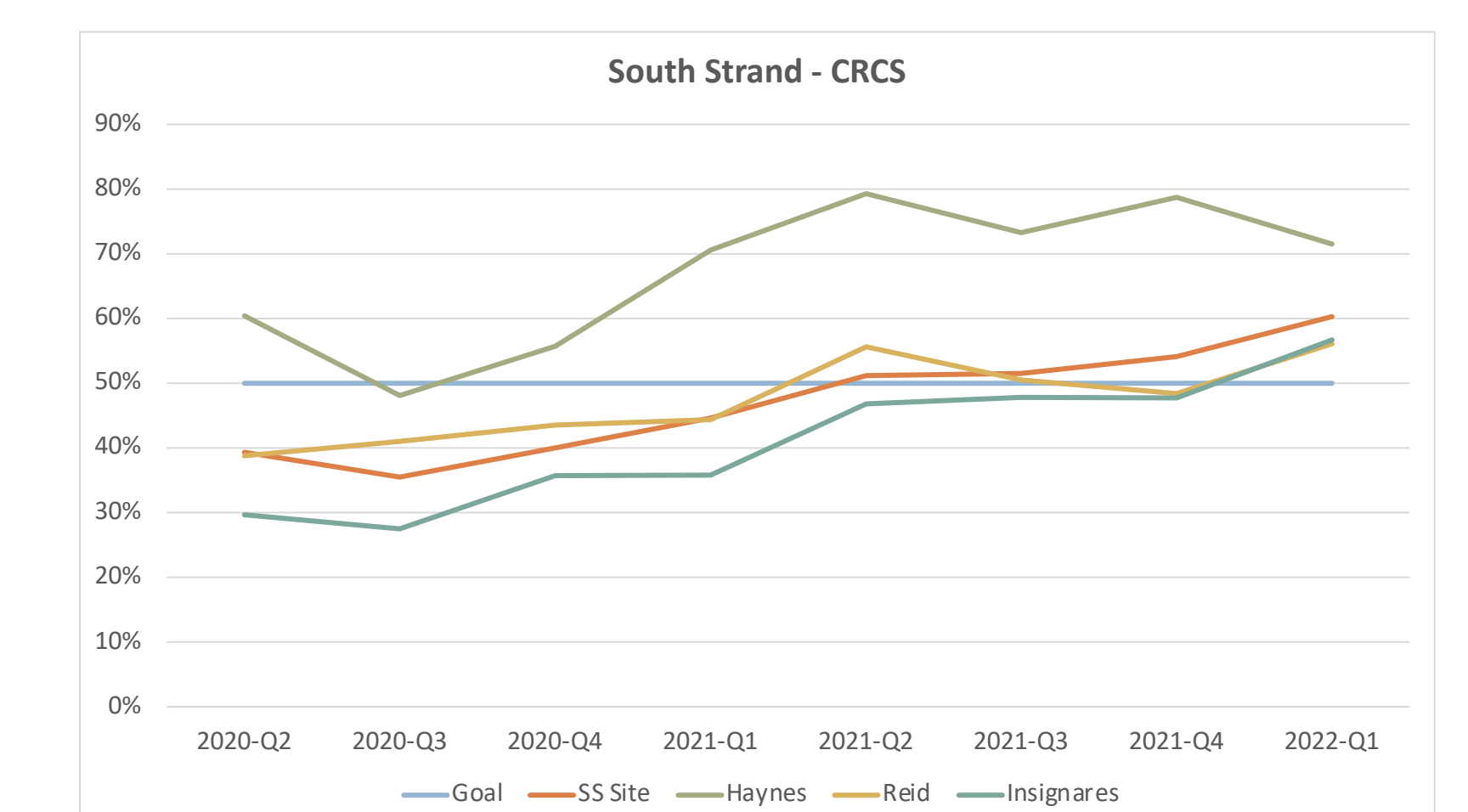
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South Strand Clinic: Jennifer Haynes, FNP; Maribeth Reid, FNP; Luis Insignares, MD; Ashley Riley, RN; Katie Blevins, LPN; Kerry Kiser, CMA; Haley Joyner, LPN; Rachel Arkel, LPN; Christopher Trout, LPN; Shannon Franco, CMA
CCPN: Annie Thibault, MS; Tracie Lewis, MS; Lisa Scott, BS; Becky Eddy, BS
ACS: Molly Black, BA; Kim Hale, BS; Beth Graham, MPH

Results



Jennifer Haynes, FNP embraced being a CRCS champion and began immediately working to improving her CRCS rates at South Strand. During the first year of the SC Unite project, Jennifer had a 20% increase in CRCS. Prior to QI Boot Camp, Jennifer's CRCS rate was 48.5% and by December 2021 her rate drastically improved to 68.5%. She set the bar high and personally demonstrated that higher CRCS rates are achievable.

Jennifer inspired her peers to do better. In Q2 2021, Maribeth Reid, FNP at South Strand was recognized by LRMC's QI Department for the most improved CRCS rate, with a 10% increase. Additionally, Dr. Insignares had a 12% increase in 2021. With all 3 South Strand providers improving their individual performance, the clinic's overall CRCS rate increase by 13.7% in 2021. The clinic's CRCS rate went from 34.0% (2020) to 47.7% (2021).



Conclusion

As South Strand CRCS champion, Jennifer Haynes, FNP significantly impacts CRCS rates by consistently ranging between 70%-80% since Q1 2021. She motivates and influences all South Strand providers to improve CRCS rates. The time dedicated in developing Jennifer as a champion was a ROI with LRMC's boosted quality star ratings, yielding higher reimbursement payments through performance-based contracts and HRSA's UDS quality payment program. All 3 clinical providers at South Strand were above 50% CRCS in Q1 2022. In fact, South Strand surpassed all LRMC clinics CRCS rates and is expected to reach LRMC's CRCS 60% stretch goal for 2022. LRMC is striving to develop more CRC provider champions at each clinic due to positive impact on CRCS and ROI.



Jennifer Haynes, FNP (L) and Dr. Insignares (R) with their poop trophy CRCS award.



Jennifer Haynes, FNP (L) and Maribeth Reid, FNP (R).