

# New York State Department of Health Promoting Cancer Screening in Federally Qualified Health Centers

October 1, 2016 - June 30, 2019



In 2016, the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and Health Research, Inc. (HRI) awarded funding to support four Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) across New York State (NYS) to improve their breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screening rates. Patient navigators were hired to work in eight FQHC practice sites to identify health center patients that were overdue for cancer screening and to assist these patients with obtaining recommended screenings. The NYSDOH provides ongoing training and technical assistance to build these centers' capacity to implement and enhance evidence-based interventions (EBIs) proven to increase cancer screening rates and to promote sustained efforts to improve cancer screening care.

## Serving High-Need Populations in New York State

New York's FQHCs provide health services to medically underserved communities in both rural and urban settings across the state. Most health center patients are economically disadvantaged and may face barriers to receiving timely and appropriate cancer screening.

Patient navigators help patients overcome barriers to cancer screening and, in combination with the implementation of EBIs to promote cancer screening, can result in improved health system practices and policies and increase cancer screening rates among New York's most vulnerable populations.



To date, navigators helped **4,165 NYS health center patients** obtain breast, cervical or colorectal cancer screenings.



## What did practice sites do?

Practice sites implemented EBIs recommended by the Community Preventive Services Task Force for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screenings. EBIs are services, programs, or policies proven to be effective in improving cancer screening rates.<sup>1</sup>



**Provider Reminders**



**One-on-One Education**



**Client Reminders**



**Provider Assessment & Feedback**



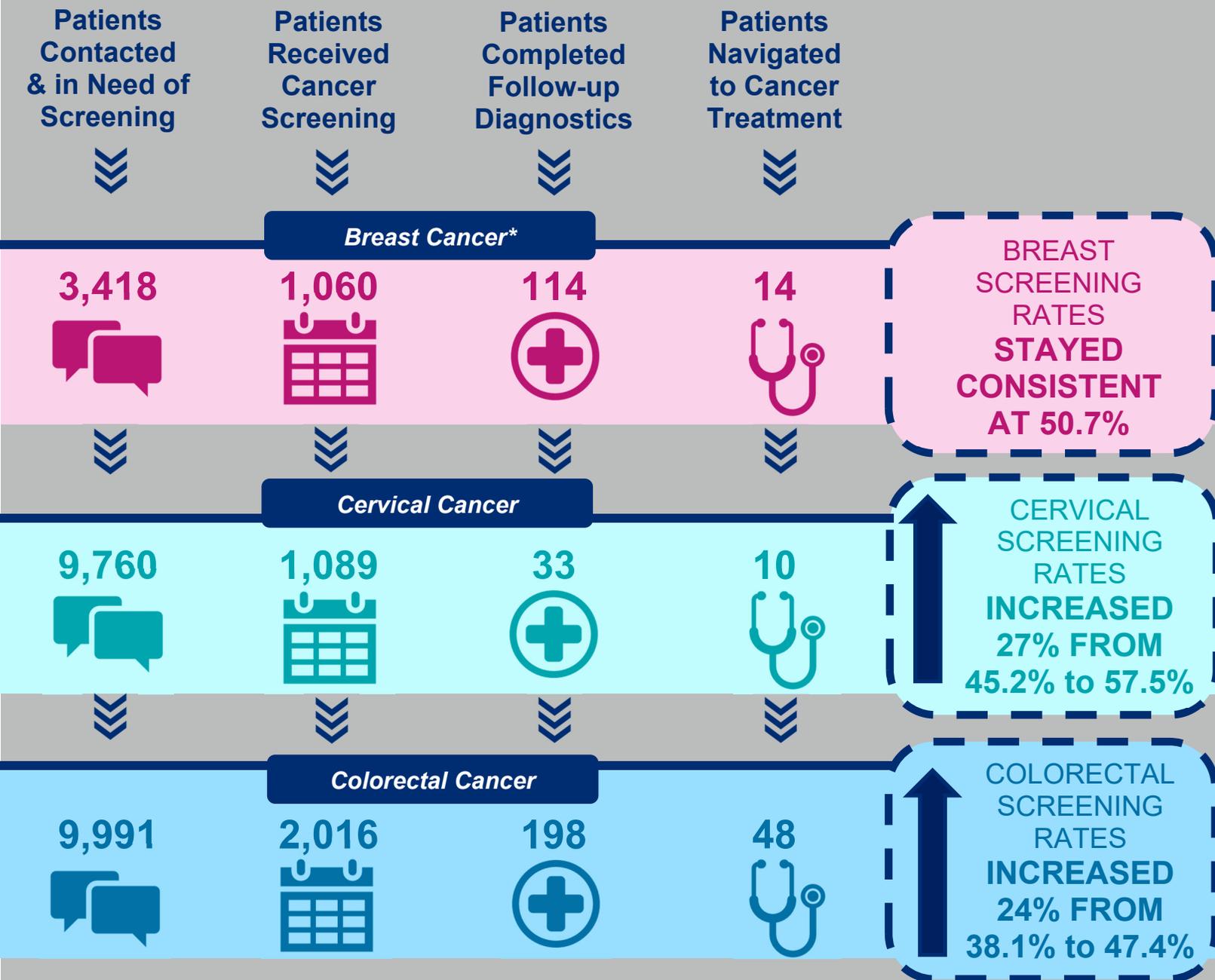
**Reducing Structural Barriers**



**Small Media**

# Did breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screening rates improve after implementation of EBIs and patient navigation?

NYSDOH monitored the number of patients navigated across practice sites. To assess the impact of the EBIs and patient navigation, sites reported screening rates at baseline and every 6 months throughout the project.



## What have we learned?

- Establishing health center teams that include clinic cancer screening champions **can improve buy-in and promote integration of navigators** in routine patient care.
- Trainings for navigators and health center project teams that provide opportunities for **sharing best practices** and **lessons learned** are continually rated as highly valuable.
- Shared learning opportunities also provide navigators with a venue to learn about **strategies to promote compliance with stool-based colorectal cancer screening tests** such as including gloves with test kits or providing pickup options of kits from patients.