

SECURED ACCESS TO GI SPECIALISTS FOR THEIR UNDERSERVED PATIENTS



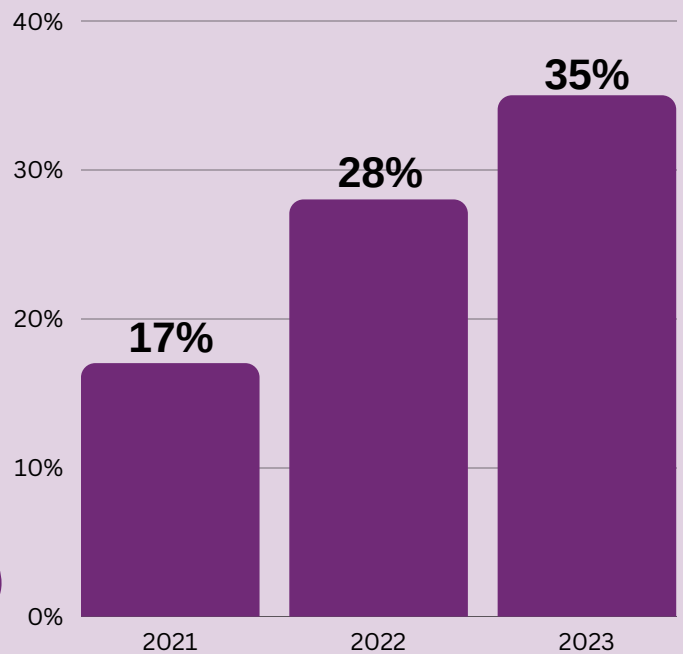
CareSouth Medical and Dental • Baton Rouge

CareSouth Medical & Dental, a FQHC in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, began working with the Screen Up initiative in 2021 to learn quality improvement methods and implement evidence-based interventions to increase their colorectal cancer (CRC) screening rate. In Project Year 3, CareSouth increased their CRC screening rate by a fourth, from **28% to 35%**. Their success in more than doubling their screening rate in two years can be attributed to CareSouth's intentional focus on patient engagement, FIT return completion, and improving access to care.

CareSouth wanted to improve their patient navigation process by better following the patient through the continuum of care, and to make sure patients were not falling through the cracks. They found that Medicaid and uninsured patients referred for colonoscopies suffered long wait times and limited access to GI specialists. To reduce this structural barrier, Dr Gregory Garner worked to secure an agreement with a local gastroenterologist group to devote two days per month to see their patients.

CareSouth implemented other evidence-based interventions that improved their CRC screening workflows including patient reminders, and provider assessment and feedback. A patient reminder system using a patient messaging tool, CareMessage, kept CRC screening in the forefront for patients to receive education, make appointments, and complete their screenings. They also started offering Cologuard as a screening option.

CRC SCREENING RATE CARESOUTH



We pursued partnering with a gastroenterologist group to increase our patients' access to obtain a screening colonoscopy. We wanted a physician that shared our philosophy of providing evidence-based health care with empathy. We expect to see decreased wait times, which leads to early detection, initiation of treatment and improving outcomes in a patient population who normally suffers from health disparities.

DR. GREGORY GARNER, CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, CARESOUTH MEDICAL AND DENTAL

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW CARESOUTH ACHIEVED THIS SUCCESS, EMAIL RENI ELEWONIBI AT BELEWO@LSUHSC.EDU.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SCREEN UP!](#)

