



WHY DON'T PEOPLE GET SCREENED FOR CANCER



Summary of Wellington North Focus Groups

Reaching Under- and Never-Screened Populations, Provincial Project

Our Goal: To increase the number of people getting screened for colorectal, breast and cervical cancer in Ontario. We are working with communities in Ontario to:

- 1) **Identify who are the never and under screened (UNS)**, what **stops** them from getting screen and what might **help** them get screened in the future.
- 2) Identify, develop and implement sustainable **interventions** to increase screening.

Provincial cancer screening data indicate that screening rates for colorectal, breast and cervical cancer are low in Wellington North, specifically surrounding Mount Forest.

Mount Forest Activities to Date: In 2011/2012 focus groups were conducted with: health care providers, men, and women from the community. Men and women were recruited through the Family Health Team, as well as through community advertisement. Men were aged 50 years or older, and women were 18 – 70 years of age. Focus groups included 6 to 10 participants and two facilitators. Focus group voice recordings were transcribed and analyzed for themes regarding the barriers and facilitators to screening in the community.

Main findings from the healthcare provider focus group:

- The UNS of Mount Forest were identified as: the Anabaptist community; working-class (especially men)
- Barriers: Lack of funding for cancer screening promotion (e.g. reminder letters); issues with electronic medical record reminder system to prompt providers to screen patients; issues of clinic accessibility (transportation, office hours, appointment wait times, doctor shortage); low health literacy; and lack of preventative care use (folks only going to the doctor when something is wrong).
- Facilitators: Being able to reach out to the community to provide education and information about screening through booths at local fairs and events; work place interventions to reach men and those unable to find the time to go to the doctor.

Main findings from the community member focus groups:

- Barriers: Access to the clinic (e.g. transportation, wait times, office hours); fear of having cancer, or having to deal with a bad result; embarrassment of the screening tests, especially in small town (lack of anonymity with provider); lack of awareness (e.g. not knowing about FOBT); lack of preventative care use (i.e. only going to the doctor when you have a problem).
- Facilitators: Importance of the Health Care Provider relationship (e.g. taking the time to explain the screening process and guidelines, and returning results even when negative); having reminders from doctor's office about when screening is needed; work place interventions (e.g. information sessions); education and awareness about screening (e.g. group visits at health clinic, and teaching young people the importance of prevention); positive personal stories about screening and cancer survival as motivators to get screened (e.g. advertisements, educational promotion in community).

Intervention activities to date:

- Updating EMR reminder system (January 2012)
- HPV self-testing pilot study (2012/2013)
- Anabaptist Cancer Screening Day Interventions (2013/2014)

Next Steps

- Return results to the community and providers