

Identifying barriers to cervical cancer screening among women 21-65 and providing evidence-based education in order to improve cervical cancer screening in a rural community clinic: A quality improvement project

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Abstract

Background: Cervical cancer screening can be done with a Pap smear. Cervical cancer rates have decreased since the Pap test was introduced. Clinical practice guidelines are in place to guide screening recommendations. Yet, in the U.S. cervical cancer screening rates are below the Healthy People 2020 recommendations. There are many barriers to cervical cancer screening adherence. Some of these barriers include fear, access to health care, health literacy, language barriers, transportation issues, childcare concerns, and ethnicity.

Objective: The purpose of this quality improvement project was to assess the current cervical cancer screening rates at Valley View Health Center (VWHC) in Chehalis, WA; provide brief evidence-based patient education; identify patient perceived barriers to cervical cancer screening and provide recommendations.

Methods: Existing data was provided by VVHC and analyzed using Excel. A survey was created in both English and Spanish and made available for women ages 21-65 at VVHC. An educational handout was provided at the end of the survey.

Results: Poor survey response rate with only two respondents. Existing data analysis (n=2,164) found an overall clinic screening rate of 75%. Decreased screening rates were identified among women ages 51-65 (72%), American Indian/Alaskan Native women (70%); and Hispanic women (17%).

Discussion: Further work needs to be done to improve screening rates. Future research should focus on women ages 51-65, AI/AN women, and Hispanic women through tailored education, focus groups, or trusted community health workers.

Keywords: cervical cancer screening, adherence, non-attending, Pap smear, barriers.