

## The Colorectal Cancer Awareness Network of Southeastern Michigan

**Collaborating Partners:** Henry Ford Health System, Beaumont Health, Ascension, Karmanos Cancer Institute, University of Michigan, Wayne State University, Oakland University, University of Detroit Mercy, Macomb County Health Department, Oakland County Health Department, The Tri-County Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program, Detroit Area Agency on Aging, American Cancer Society, Community Health and Social Services, ACCESS and Detroit Community Health Connection

### **Project description and outcomes**

The Colorectal Awareness Network (CRAN) is a community-based coalition of individuals and representatives of health system organizations, universities, community agencies and survivors who share a common mission to raise awareness to and prevention of colorectal cancer. The long-range goal of the CRAN is to raise awareness through education and increase colorectal screening rates, therefore preventing colorectal cancer.

Initially formed to raise awareness about the need for colorectal cancer screenings in Macomb County, this group has expanded to include: the American Cancer Society, four hospital systems (Henry Ford Health System, Ascension, Beaumont Health and Michigan Medicine), four universities (Wayne State, Oakland, University of Detroit Mercy and University of Michigan), three county-level health departments (Macomb, Oakland, Wayne), Federally-Qualified Health Centers and other community agencies, such as the Detroit Area Agency on Aging and the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP).

Past coalition activities include educational forums, annual colon health awareness events and the development and coordination of regional screening initiatives, such as the FluFIT program, which entails a partnership between health departments and health systems for the provision, processing and tracking of FIT tests to improve access to screening services for those who may not otherwise receive CRC screenings. The FluFit program received an honorable mention at the 2017 MCC Annual Meeting for collaboration. Current projects include expanding the FluFIT program to include faith-based initiatives and corporate /employee wellness partnerships, and the consideration of new innovations to combine FIT testing with the provision of other health services, such as Hepatitis A vaccinations, for example. CRAN has also established a small steering committee of sub-committee leads to further guide initiatives that will lead to increased survivor engagement and educational outreach.

Also serving as an advocacy or action coalition, CRAN has worked alongside the American Cancer Society's Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) to advocate for oral chemo parity, increased funding for the Michigan Tobacco Quit line and other tobacco prevention initiatives. CRAN also feverishly advocates for the closing of the Medicare loophole that permits additional cost sharing for patients, when polyps are removed during colonoscopies (Bill HR 1017). Although colonoscopies are provided at no cost-sharing to Medicare patients, the removal of polyps, however, is not a covered benefit, resulting in undue economic hardship for patients who often face significant barriers to care and prevention services.

CRAN exemplifies public health in action: through the collaboration of private, public and non-profit sectors, public health concerns are being addressed in our community. This creative collaboration brings agencies together to promote health and well-being within their community, with an unwavering commitment to work together to achieve a world without cancer.

Key outcomes of this collaboration include: Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month events, Regional FluFIT screening program (2016-current), and Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month in a Box toolkit for clinical, corporate and community partners.