

## **Low Use; Your State/County's Rates**

**Interested in seeing how well your county or state has done in providing colorectal cancer screening to people with Medicare?**

Click on the following link:

<http://www.mrnc.org/crcreport2/>

The Carolinas Centers for Medical Excellence, Inc., the Quality Improvement Organization for North and South Carolina, calculated national, state, and county colorectal cancer screening rates using Medicare claims data from 1998-2004. The data indicate that over half (52%) of those eligible for screening had at least one test in the seven-year period.

Other highlights from the data:

- Although the largest group of people eligible for screening was composed of persons between the ages 65-74 (41% of those eligible), the rate of screening was highest among people ages 75-84 (59% screened);
- Test use was highest among Caucasians (53%), followed by Asians (46%), African Americans (45%), persons of Hispanic descent (45%), and Native Americans (35%);
- There was considerable disparity between the test rates for those eligible for only Medicare (54%) and persons eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid (43%);
- Persons eligible for Medicare due to a disability also had lower test rates (45%) than those eligible because of age (54%);
- Among the four covered tests, fecal occult blood test was the most commonly used test with a rate of 34%. Colonoscopy had the second highest use rate (31%), followed by sigmoidoscopy (14%) and barium enema (6%);
- Test use varied across states. In 2004, Rhode Island Medicare consumers had the highest test use (26% had one of the tests) and the lowest in Wyoming (13%)

## **CMS Needs Your Help**

No part of the Medicare population has high rates of use of colorectal cancer screening tests. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) needs your help to get the word out to your Medicare patients and their caregivers about the benefits of colorectal cancer screening. We hope that you will encourage your eligible Medicare patients to take advantage of this potentially life saving benefit.

## **For More Information**

For information and resources to help you discuss colorectal cancer screening with your patients, visit the following American Cancer Society website:

[http://www.cancer.org/colonmd?utm\\_source=CMSlistserv&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=colon&utm\\_content=colonMD](http://www.cancer.org/colonmd?utm_source=CMSlistserv&utm_medium=email&utm_term=colon&utm_content=colonMD)

Medicare-Covered Colorectal Cancer Screening Tests/Procedures:

For specific details on Medicare coverage criteria and billing procedures for colorectal cancer screening services, refer to Special Edition *MLN Matters* article:

SE0710 <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/SE0710.pdf>.

Thank you for supporting CMS' effort to increase awareness of colorectal cancer and the colorectal cancer screening benefit covered by Medicare.

**Colorectal cancer is preventable, treatable, and beatable. Encourage your patients to get screened—it could save their lives.**