

From Purple to Pink: Improving breast cancer screening rates in a resident clinic



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BACKGROUND

Breast cancer is the most common non-skin cancer among women, and risk increases as age does. Most major agencies recommend routine mammography from age 50-75 years old because the benefits of screening outweigh the harms of increased testing and treatment. Nationally, 68% of eligible women with health insurance had undergone mammography within the last 2 years. Initial data showed that our clinic was well behind the national average at only 48%.

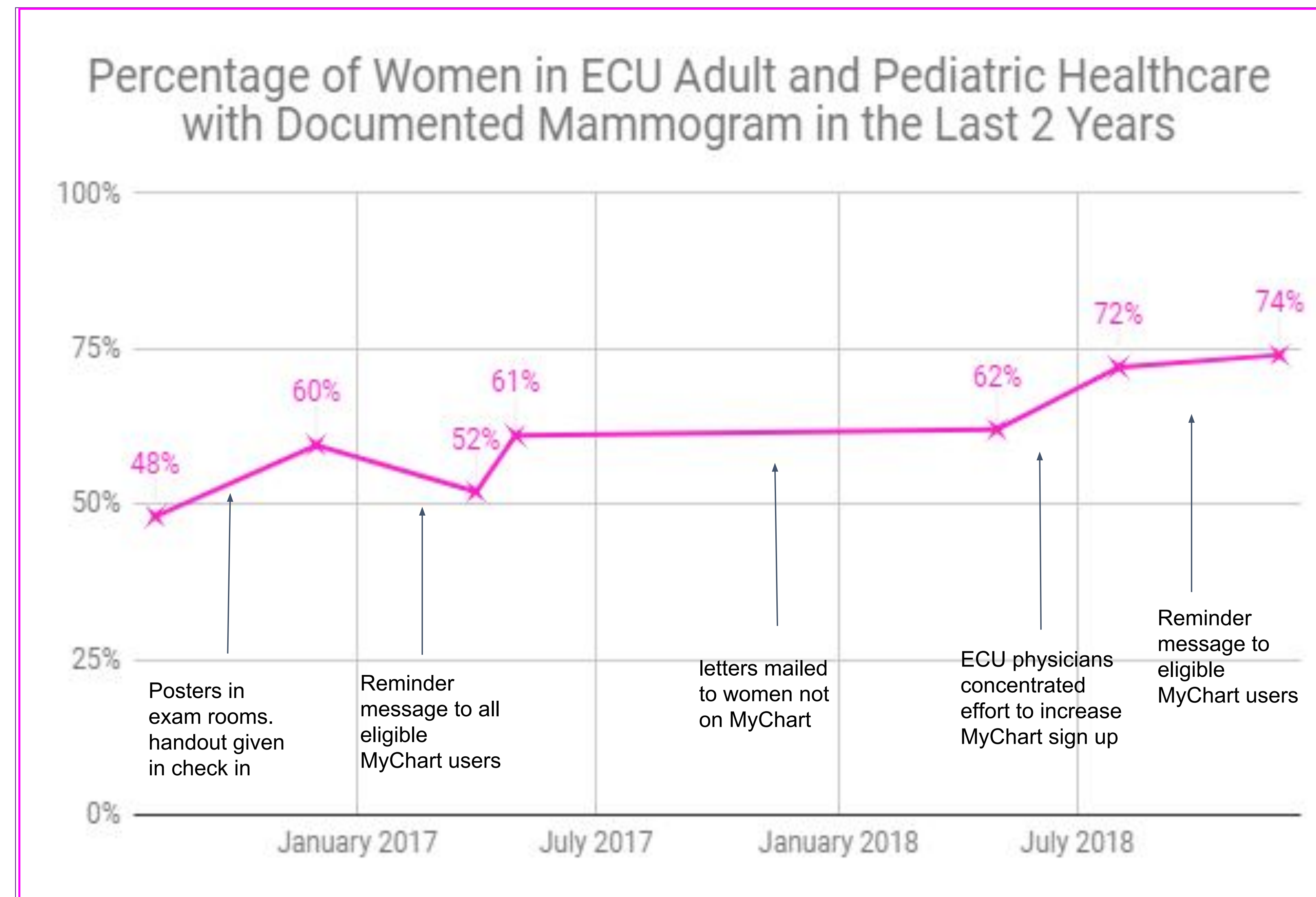
PROJECT AIM

By May 2019, 80% of women age 50-75 years old whose primary care provider is East Carolina Adult and Pediatric Health Care will have a documented mammogram within the last 2 years.

PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

A brainstorming session and process flowchart were developed at the beginning of the project. Barriers to screening were identified: awareness of the need, knowledge regarding age and frequency of screening, availability of places to perform the mammograms, cost, and discomfort due to the test itself. Several interventions were implemented throughout the two years of this project. The biggest change included handing out information sheets when women in the target age range checked in to clinic. These sheets included information regarding importance of mammograms and which radiology practices in town offered free screening mammograms without appointments. To reach the women who did not have appointments during the initial intervention period, this information was sent via the electronic messaging system embedded in the electronic health record to all eligible women. The interventions currently underway include sending out another patient portal message every October as a part of breast cancer awareness month.

CHANGES MADE (PDSA CYCLES)



RESULTS/OUTCOMES

Starting in 2016, 48% of women aged 50-75 years old with primary care in East Carolina's Adult and Pediatric Health Care resident clinic had documentation of a mammogram within the previous 2 years. As of May 2018, 62% of eligible women in the target population were up to date on screening mammograms.

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL INVOLVED

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LESSONS LEARNED

- Patient awareness is one of the many barriers that keep eligible women from obtaining mammograms
- The most impactful change implemented was incorporating reminders into the workflow of check in
- As part of this and other QI projects in the clinic, communication with patients in general was improved

NEXT STEPS

- Send list of eligible patients to radiology practices for them to follow up
- With the help of new nurse QI specialist, will coordinate the scheduling process with women still in need of mammogram via telephone

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