Despite many public awareness & media campaigns associated with Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the rate of screening mammographies has decreased in recent years. What can you do at your clinic to increase breast cancer screening rates?

### STRATEGIES

1. **Offer flexible mammography screening hours such as evenings and Saturdays**
   - Develop communication between your office and the mammography center or OB/GYN provider. Ask patients to confirm your office contact information when at the mammogram appointment.
   - Ensure that new scanned mammography reports are “filed” or results entered in fields that are used to generate performance reports (e.g., reports attached to orders, results and date entered in flow sheet, or method appropriate for your EHR). Standardize the process (i.e., who is responsible, training, etc.).

2. **Offer culturally sensitive educational materials and support services (such as interpreters) to women of ethnic and racial minorities, as well as other underserved groups such as the elderly, immigrants, men, and people with disabilities. Make sure you consider patients’ literacy levels.**
   - Perform data cleanup for patients whose last mammograms are not captured in reports and are not due for a mammogram for 3 months or longer
   - For high risk patients or patients overdue for a mammogram, mail reminders or use phone reminders
   - Print reminders on patients’ bills

3. **Work with your local places of worship and community-based organizations.**
   - Schedule mammogram in conjunction with other office visits
   - Reinforce the cost coverage

4. **Use flu season as an opportunity to promote screenings.**
   - Develop compelling scripted messages for MAs (e.g., linked to staying healthy for family)
   - Provide materials with compelling messages and intended timeframe for mammogram completion

5. **Make sure that data reflects services received:**
   - Develop communication between your office and the mammography center or OB/GYN provider. Ask patients to confirm your office contact information when at the mammogram appointment.
   - Schedule mammogram in conjunction with other office visits
   - Reinforce the cost coverage

6. **Increase patient follow-through:**
   - Hold periodic meetings of MAs and primary care providers to generate ideas for process changes and build support for implementing tested ideas that were successful
   - As a provider, stay up-to-date on practice guidelines and talk to patients about the importance of early detection

Some content in this column is based on material from CDC.gov.

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For information about Stratis Health’s work with screening measures, contact Jerri Hiniker, jhiniker@stratishealth.org

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