

# Voices from the Field

August 31, 2021

## ACCSIS Appalachia

**A Q&A with members of the Ohio Hills Health Centers - Quaker City Family Health Center (Quaker City, Ohio) ACCSIS Implementation Team on how they were able to successfully navigate the COVID-19 pandemic** *Jeanne Jellison (RN and Health Center Champion), Staci Fellows (CNP), Carol Davolio (Director of Quality Services), and Kim Masters (LPN) shared their perspectives.*



*Quaker City Family Health Center Implementation Team, Quaker City, OH (Pictured: Jeanne Jellison, Staci Fellows, Cortne Oliver (front desk administrator), & Kim Masters; Not pictured: Carol Davolio)*

### **What were your biggest challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

The biggest challenge was getting colonoscopies scheduled. Because elective surgeries were “put on hold,” we had to figure out different ways to make sure people could get cancer screening tests. If someone had a family history, someone who would normally get a colonoscopy, rather than a FIT or Cologuard, we needed a new approach. We had to find ways for people to get the care they needed.

### **What did you do to try to overcome challenges with CRC screening during this time?**

We “ramped up” our use of Cologuard. When we did, we found that the procedure for ordering test was too complicated. After talking with the Exact Science representative, we were able to simplify the procedure. We also made a lot of phone calls. We called patients to let them know they should be screened, and we called to remind them if they hadn’t completed a test. We used the pandemic challenge as an opportunity. We have now caught up on the backlog of people who needed CRC screening. To accomplish that, we needed to keep track of the process. Who needed CRC screening? Which patients had we ordered tests for and when? Did the patient complete their test? What were the results and was additional testing needed? Who should make follow-up calls and when? There will always be stragglers, and that has nothing to do with COVID-19.

**Names:** Jeanne Jellison, Staci Fellows, Cortne Oliver, Kim Masters, Carol Davolio  
**Organization:** Quaker City Family Health Center  
**Location:** Quaker City, Ohio  
**Research Project:** ACCSIS-Appalachia

**Your CRC screening numbers continued to improve during the pandemic. How did you manage to do this?**

The biggest thing that made a difference was the reminders. If a patient was a no-show for a colonoscopy consult, we would call and remind them to reschedule, and we would remind ourselves to talk with them when they returned to the health center for an appointment. The staff worked together closely to keep each other informed. We make sure we know who needs CRC screening or follow-up so we can talk to them about it. We do not want to miss an opportunity to lay the groundwork.

**What advice would you give to other health centers that struggled with CRC screening during the pandemic and in its' aftermath?**

Don't give up. Just because someone said no the first time does not mean they will say no the second time or the third. Even if a patient did not follow-up on a recommendation for a long time, keep trying. Do not give up.