

National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable Recognizes Leaders in Colon Cancer Prevention Effort with 80% by 2018 National Achievement Award

Award honors individuals and organizations that contribute to ongoing progress in the fight against colon cancer

Atlanta, GA - March 3, 2016 - The National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable (NCCRT), an organization co-founded by the American Cancer Society and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has recognized a combined total of five organizations with the 80% by 2018 National Achievement Award, a prestigious national honor recognizing leadership in the ongoing effort to increase colon cancer screening rates across the United States.

The 80% by 2018 National Achievement Award recognizes individuals and organizations who are dedicating their time, talent and expertise to advancing needed initiatives that support the shared goal to regularly screen 80% of adults 50 and over by 2018. Over 700 organizations – including medical professional societies, academic centers, survivor groups, government agencies, cancer coalitions, cancer centers, payers, and many others – have signed a pledge to make this goal a priority. This program seeks to highlight the work of 80% by 2018 partners and other leaders and organizations who are advancing this important goal.

This year's grand prize winner is Coal Country Community Health Centers of North Dakota. This community health center will receive a \$3,000 grant to support their continued efforts in the fight against colon cancer. Other notable honorees include Phoebe Putney Health System of Georgia; Tina Kiser Cancer Concern Coalition of Ohio; Premier Medical Associates of Pennsylvania; and the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority, who will each receive a \$1,000 grant.

"The recipients of the 80% by 2018 National Achievement Award are not only contributing to one of the greatest public health efforts of our time – they are leading the way," said Dr. Richard Wender, chief cancer control officer of the American Cancer Society and NCCRT chair. "This is an ambitious goal, but it is a critical goal. These health centers, organizations and companies are making a real impact, and we are confident that their efforts will save lives."

Coal Country Community Health Centers, Beulah, ND (Grand Prize Winner)

Coal Country Community Health Centers is a Federally Qualified Health Center in North Dakota serving a rural population with well over 7,000 patients. Over the course of the past three years, Coal Country has successfully increased colon cancer screening rates among its patient population from 29% to 70%. Coal Country serves as a promising example of how rural health systems can pool resources and work together within a medical home to improve the health of their patients.

Tina Kiser Cancer Concern Coalition, Cambridge, OH (Honoree)

The Tina Kiser Cancer Concern Coalition (TKC3), under the direction of Dr. Michael Sarap, has exhibited a commitment to colon cancer prevention in Southeastern Ohio and improving quality of life for all colon cancer survivors. Outreach efforts of the coalition are concentrated in a four-part approach: community education, providing underserved patients with free and reduced cost screening tests, physician education, and awareness. These efforts have contributed to a whopping 90% screening rate in Guernsey County and late stage cases have plummeted from 60% of cases 10 years ago to 12% in 2014.

Phoebe Putney Health System, Albany, GA (Honoree)

Phoebe Putney Health System not only works diligently to reach 80% by 2018 among their own

underserved patient population – performing over 2,600 screening colonoscopies and removing adenomatous polyps from over 1,000 patients – but they also serve as a model and leader for other health systems. Phoebe is a founding member of the Cancer Coalition of South Georgia and their ongoing contributions have ensured its success. On March 30, 2016, Phoebe will serve on the opening panel of Georgia's first Colorectal Cancer Roundtable to challenge other hospitals to be the links to care needed to have the entire populations they serve reach a screening rate of 80% by 2018.

Premier Medical Associates, Monroeville, PA (Honoree)

Premier Medical Associates is a multispecialty group practice of 100 providers located in the eastern suburbs of Pittsburgh, PA. Premier was an early supporter of the 80% by 2018 campaign, taking proactive steps to educate their physicians about the importance of offering both colonoscopies and FITs to patients and discussing this screening at every single patient encounter. Premier also began proactively mailing FITs to patients due for screening, and implemented an intake form process asking if patients ever been screened for colon cancer upon their arrival. As of December 2015, they have hit an incredible 80% screening rate.

South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority, Columbia, SC (Honoree)

In an effort to increase the number of eligible State Health Plan (SHP) members current with their colon cancer screening, the Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA) reviewed and changed policies to enhance screening efforts. Though colon cancer screening had been covered by the SHP since 2007, deductibles, co-pays, and out-of-pocket costs for the consultation visit were required, and data showed that only 55% of members age 50 and older were current with their routine colon cancer screening. PEBA decided that, effective January 2016, there would be no out-of-pocket expense incurred by SHP members for colon cancer screening. To promote this new benefit, PEBA is currently hosting regional lunch-and-learn workshops with local gastroenterologists.

Learn more about these organizations' exemplary colon cancer screening efforts on the NCCRT website: nccrt.org/tools/80-by-2018-2016-awardees/

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society is a global grassroots force of 2.5 million volunteers saving lives and fighting for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. As the largest voluntary health organization, the Society's efforts have contributed to a 22 percent decline in cancer death rates in the U.S. since 1991, and a 50 percent drop in smoking rates. Thanks in part to our progress; 14.5 million Americans who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will celebrate more birthdays this year. We're determined to finish the fight against cancer. We're finding cures as the nation's largest private, not-for-profit investor in cancer research, ensuring people facing cancer have the help they need and continuing the fight for access to quality health care, lifesaving screenings, clean air, and more. For more information, to get help, or to join the fight, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.
