**PAPER CLIP—COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING**

**Description:** Colorectal cancer is a cancer that develops in the tissue of the colon and/or rectum. The colon absorbs food and water and stores waste. The rectum is responsible for passing waste from the body. This is the 3rd most commonly diagnosed cancer and the 2nd leading cause of death for men and women combined in the United States.

**Possible Cause:** The exact cause of cancer is not known. However, there are certain risk factors that could increase a person’s chance to develop the disease.

Some of the risk factors include:
- Being over the age of 50 years
- Personal history of polyps (a growth) on the inner wall of the colon or rectum
- Family history of colon cancer
- Life style factors such as: diets high in red or processed meat, cigarette smoking, being overweight, physically inactive, heavy alcohol use, and others.
- For people that are African American, it is recommended to start screening at the age of 45 years.

**Diagnostic Tests:** When discovered early, colon cancer is highly treatable. Testing should be done between the ages of 50 to 75 years. If you have a family history of colon cancer you need to discuss with your Provider for earlier testing. Possible tests are: FOBT (High-sensitivity Fecal Occult Blood Tests), Fit test, Sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy. Note: Cologuard has not been approved by the FDA.

**Conversation with Member:**

- **General opening such as:** “How are you feeling today? We have noted that you have not been screened for colon/rectal cancer. Can we spend a few minutes discussing this?

- **Offer information:** This is the 3rd most common cancer in the United States and affects all races, both men and women. If you get routine testing starting at the age of 50 years (if African American, testing starts at the age of 45 years) this may identify potential cancer forming polyps and allow for early treatment.

- **Get more specific:** It is recommended that you get screened. There are a variety of tests, some that do not require any preparation and can be done in the privacy of your home, such as the “FIT” test. Other tests that your provider may recommend could require a dietary and bowl prep and are more invasive (such as a colonoscopy). Talk with your provider about which type of test is best for you.

- **Lifestyle impacts & Medical Tx options:** We discussed some tests, but there are also some lifestyle factors that may affect your risk for colorectal cancer. These include: good dietary habits, weight control, and physical activity. If you smoke or consume alcohol heavily, you may want to consider some changes.

- **Review the member’s plan of action:** “Based on this information, can we make a plan for you to work with your provider to get a screening?”

**National Standard:** Priority Gap for HEDIS & Stars

**References:**
- American Cancer Society or phone 1 800-227-2345
- CDC