

Title: *Cervical Cancer Screening and Patient Navigation (X-SPAN): Increasing Capacity for Rural and Medically Underserved Women*

Background: In Texas, recent legislative decisions to restrict eligibility for Medicaid and funding for clinical services affiliated with Planned Parenthood, has left many low income women without access to affordable health care. As a result, the demand for preventative services, like cervical cancer screening, currently outpace capacity, fostering disparities in screening participation, incidence, and mortality, particularly among the uninsured and medically underserved, as well as racial and ethnic minority groups.

Methods: UT Southwestern Moncrief Cancer Institute has established a successful delivery model to improve access for breast cancer screening across North Texas using the CDC sponsored Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening program as the primary funding platform. Expanding this model of care to include cervical cancer screening, the program includes a) Outreach & Health Promotion to reach rural and underserved women; b) Delivery & Navigation to guide patients through comprehensive screening and follow-up care; and c) Centralized Reimbursement to fund clinical services.

Delivery and Navigation efforts are led by bilingual, oncology-certified nurses, who have undergone training approved by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to provide Papanicolaou (Pap) testing with physician oversight. Quality control measures are delegated by the Moncrief medical director and program gynecologist. Follow-up, including colposcopy with biopsy and LEEP, are performed by a board certified gynecologist.

Results: Since the program expansion in April, Pap tests were provided to 802 women in lower-resource settings. The delivery model was able to provide services for hard-to-reach patients, approximately 20% residing in rural counties, and assure follow-up to abnormal cancer screening results.

Conclusion: Moncrief Cancer Institute has leveraged a proven model to successfully implement a comprehensive cervical cancer population-based screening and patient navigation program for the uninsured and medically underserved in North Texas, increasing provider capacity to reduce disparities in care.