

2021 Quality Study – The Effects of Covid on Screening Mammograms

Describe the problem being studied:

The pandemic was a hindrance to women participating in their regularly scheduled screening mammogram appointments.

Describe the criteria used to study the problem:

- Compare the number of patients for screening mammograms for the years 2019, 2020, and 2021 to see the effects of the Covid pandemic on routine appointments
 - Identify perceived barriers and apprehensions of patients to better prepare for any future events of the same scale
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Timeframe:

April 2021 – July 2021

Study Findings:

- April 2020 Covid began to affect Beaufort and the surrounding areas with many unknowns and no solid guidance from the CDC regarding routine medical appointments
 - Reminder letters were not mailed out for the patients due in April 2020 due to the center being under a moderated schedule, and in April of 2021 we only had 343 patients come in for their mammogram
 - The April trend is as follows: 2020 –Not Mailed, 2021 – 343 Mailed, 2022 – 874 Mailed
 - The study shows without the additional reminder from the center patients were still hesitant to come in for a routine mammogram. Even with sanitizing and masking protocols in place the numbers were extremely low.
 - May 2021 showed a 24% decrease in patient activity from the previous year
 - June numbers remained steady while July dropped approximately 13% which coincides with a local increase in Covid cases
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What National Benchmarks were used:

- The American College of Radiology and the American Cancer Society recommend yearly screening mammograms
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What action was taken at the completion of the study:

- Marketing pushed out information regarding the screening guidelines and emphasized the hospital's protocols regarding cleanliness and patient safety
- Primary physicians were reminded to order screening procedures if the patient was due for a mammogram

- After-hour events were held to assist employees in staying on track with yearly mammograms as they were working overtime during the pandemic
- The center is prepared to keep patients informed of screening guidelines through advertisements and social media should this type of event reoccur