

## Colorectal Cancer Screening in Washington: Developing a Community-Based Program

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*Abstract:* A comprehensive colorectal cancer (CRC) recruitment, education and screening program is now being implemented through the Washington Breast, Cervical and Colon Health Program's service delivery system. This project is modeled after the successful CDC- funded Colorectal Cancer Screening Demonstration Program implemented by Public Health –Seattle & King County (PHSKC). PHSKC was one of five programs in the U.S. to receive CDC funding to develop a replicable, clinic and community-based system to increase CRC screening among low-income adults, age 50 and older with little or no insurance coverage. Since July 2006, the project has screened over 2,000 people in 3 counties.

Partners in Washington have had a longstanding interest in colorectal cancer. The Washington CRC task force has been working to increase screening rates since 2001. The task force gained momentum in 2004 when the Comprehensive Cancer Control Partnership was formed, and colorectal cancer was identified as a priority. Legislative successes such as mandated screening coverage for the insured, annual House/Senate Resolutions declaring March as Colon Cancer Awareness month, and state funding to expand PHSKC's screening program state-wide have bolstered attention.

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) and PHSKC co-hosted a statewide Dialogue for Action colorectal cancer leadership summit in September 2008. The goal of the summit was to identify new opportunities to increase screening and treatment services for all populations in Washington, with a special focus on the underserved. This Dialogue complemented work underway to build a state-wide colorectal screening program.