

Questions & Answers

Keeping health care providers informed of payment, policy or program changes

To: Family Physicians

Published By: Implementation Branch

Date Issued: October 12, 2010

Corresponding Bulletin Reference: 4519

Re: **ColonCancerCheck Letters to Patients**

The ColonCancerCheck program will be sending new types of correspondence to patients. The following are answers to questions family physicians may have about this new correspondence.

Recall/Reminder Letters and Invitation Letters to Patients Turning 50 Years of Age

- Q1. My office calls and sends letters to our patients who are eligible for colorectal cancer screening. If ColonCancerCheck is now sending recall and reminder letters, and will send invitation letters to patients turning 50 years of age, does this mean we no longer need to contact these patients for screening?
- A1. Family physicians are encouraged to continue to contact patients who are eligible for colorectal screening and have not completed a ColonCancerCheck FOBT within the past two years. ColonCancerCheck correspondence will provide additional support to physicians in encouraging patients to participate in colorectal cancer screening.
- Q2. If ColonCancerCheck is sending recall and reminder letters, and will send invitation letters to patients turning 50 years of age, can I claim the Colorectal Cancer Screening Management fee code (Q005A)?
- A2. No, physicians will not be able to claim the Q005A fee code for letters sent from the ColonCancerCheck program. However, eligible Patient Enrolment Model physicians who contact enrolled patients for the purpose of scheduling an appointment for colorectal cancer screening may continue to submit the Q005A fee code. Please refer to Bulletin 4482, issued July 22, 2008, for further information on the prescribed methods for contacting enrolled patients and conditions for claiming this fee.

Positive Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) Result Letters

- Q3. Will my patients with positive FOBT results receive a letter from ColonCancerCheck before my office has received the test results from the laboratory?
- A3. Letters to patients with positive FOBT results will be mailed by ColonCancerCheck approximately two weeks after the laboratory sends the test result to the physician who ordered the test.

Q4. What does a positive FOBT result mean?

A4. ColonCancerCheck defines a positive FOBT result as blood detected in at least one of the three samples in the FOBT kit. For ColonCancerCheck branded FOBT kits, the overall kit positivity rate is about 4.5%. This rate has remained relatively stable over the past 18 months.

General Questions about ColonCancerCheck

Q5. How does ColonCancerCheck obtain information about my patients?

A5. Under the *Personal Health Information and Protection Act, 2004* (PHIPA), the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has authorized Cancer Care Ontario to compile and maintain the Colorectal Cancer Screening Registry. The Registry collects personal health information about patients who may be eligible for colorectal cancer screening. Under PHIPA, the registry is permitted to collect personal health information to assist with or improve the provision of health care.

Q6. What do I tell my patients who don't want to receive correspondence from the ColonCancerCheck program?

A6. Patients may choose, at any time, not to be contacted by ColonCancerCheck. If the individual does not wish to be contacted by ColonCancerCheck, he or she must:

- Call ColonCancerCheck's toll-free number 1-866-662-9233 to make this request; or
- Complete a ColonCancerCheck Withdrawal from Correspondence Form, available at www.health.gov.on.ca/en/ms/coloncancercheck/docs/ccc_WithdrawalfromCorrespondenceForm.pdf, and mail or fax it to the program (contact information is provided on the form).

Q7. Can I provide ColonCancerCheck FOBTs (green kits) to patients under 50 years of age?

A7. ColonCancerCheck recommends screening for asymptomatic patients aged 50 and over who are at average risk of colorectal cancer using the ColonCancerCheck FOBT. This is consistent with clinical guidelines¹.

When a physician provides a ColonCancerCheck FOBT to a patient under 50 years of age, the test will be processed by the laboratory, and test results will be sent to the physician. However, the patient will not receive a recall letter in two years advising the patient that it is time to be re-screened for colorectal cancer.

Non-ColonCancerCheck FOBTs (red kits) continue to be available from community laboratories for diagnostic purposes, or for patients under the age of 50.

Bulletins and Q's and A's are available on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care website
<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/>.

¹ Canadian Task Force on Preventive Healthcare. *Colorectal cancer screening: recommendation statement*. Canadian Medical Association Journal 2001; 165(2):206-208.