In the past 17 years, Kentucky’s colorectal cancer (CRC) screening rate has improved more than any other state in the country. As screening rates have risen, incidence rates and mortality rates have declined DRAMATICALLY.

In Kentucky, colorectal cancer screening rates have improved significantly from 1999 to 2016. In 1999, the screening rate was 34.7%, and in 2016, it increased to 70.1%. This increase has led to a 50% decrease in screening rates and a 30% decrease in mortality rates.

In the past 17 years, Kentucky has seen a decrease in incidence of colorectal cancer, meaning that every year approximately 350 Kentuckians who would have gotten colorectal cancer no longer get the disease. "Take home" blood stool tests have increased screening options. This chart measures the percentage of Kentuckians aged 50-75 who have fully met the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommendation for colorectal cancer screening in 2016. "Fully met" is defined as having had a colonoscopy within the past 10 years; or a sigmoidoscopy within the past five years; or a FOBT/FIT within the past one year.

All 15 Kentucky Area Development Districts have improved cancer screening rates. Purchase Area Development District achieved an 83% CRC screening rate in 2016! Purchase, Barren River, Pennyrile, Kentucky River and Gateway Area Development Districts increased their screening rates by over 30% in the past 10 years!
How did Kentucky make progress?

Long-term cross-sector collaboration

Champions, champions, champions

Coordinated efforts to reach the public, providers and systems with best-practice messaging and interventions

Strong policies that reduce barriers and expand access

**POLICY FACT:**

Kentucky was one of the first states in the country to: 1) require almost all health plans to cover the cost of a colonoscopy after a positive FIT or stool DNA test, with no co-pay or deductible; and 2) ensure that a patient who has a polyp found during a screening colonoscopy must continue to be coded and billed as a screening colonoscopy, not a diagnostic colonoscopy. Correct coding is key to no-cost colonoscopies!

**There's more to be done!**

Despite our progress, there is more to be done. 21 percent of colorectal cancer cases in Kentucky are still diagnosed at a late stage. Blacks have a higher incidence rate and mortality rate from colorectal cancer than whites. The highest incidence and mortality rates in Kentucky are in the Appalachian region of the state, and they are declining much more slowly compared to the non-Appalachian area of the state.

**WORKING TOGETHER TO ADDRESS COLORECTAL CANCER IN KENTUCKY**

The Kentucky Cancer Consortium Colon Cancer Committee is committed to coordinate efforts in colorectal cancer prevention and control, working together to implement objectives in the state’s Cancer Action Plan. Visit [http://www.kycancerc.org](http://www.kycancerc.org) to find out how your organization can become involved.

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