Multicomponent Intervention to Promote Colorectal Cancer Screening in a Federally Qualified Health Center Serving a Homeless Population

PURPOSE
The purpose of the project was to increase the colorectal cancer (CRC) screening rate at a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) serving a homeless population in the Houston downtown area.

BACKGROUND
CRC is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. The CRC screening rate at the FQHC was 18.63% in 2018, while the goal of Healthy People 2020 was to increase the rate to 70.5%.

METHODOLOGY
An evidence-based multicomponent intervention consisting of the following components was implemented to improve CRC screening: (a) in-clinic and mail distribution of screening kits, (b) reminder system for patients due for screening, (c) use of media, (d) patient and staff education, (e) patient navigation, and (f) staff reminders and feedback. The process and outcome measures were the percentage of patients with CRC screening orders per provider and the CRC screening rate, respectively. The process flow of the project was affected due to COVID-19.

RESULTS
The CRC screening rate increased from 25.64% before the implementation of the project to 29.95%, four months after implementation. The rate dropped to 20.87% when the project was placed on hold due to COVID-19. Restarting the screening partially prevented further significant decrease in the screening rate. An initial increase in the percentage of patients with CRC screening orders per provider was affected by COVID-19, but started increasing steadily for five providers after the screening was restarted.

IMPLICATIONS
Further study is needed to evaluate the maximum effects of the intervention in improving CRC screening rate.