PIVOTAL ROLE IN PREVENTION:
The impact of a nurse in medical behavioral health integration at a community mental health center

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BACKGROUND

※ People with schizophrenia and other serious mental illnesses (SMI) have a life expectancy that is 15-20 years shorter than the general population[4]

※ Factors contributing to the increased morbidity and mortality of those with SMI include [1,2,3]
- Less engagement with the healthcare system
- Beginning care in later stages of illness
- Stigma and poverty

※ In October 2021, Freedom Trail Clinic (FTC) was awarded a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) grant

METHODS AND MATERIALS

※ Between April 2022 and January 2023, **138** patients completed a Coordinated Health and Medical Prevention Services (CHAMPS) assessment with RN, which includes:
- Metabolic and side effect monitoring
- Cancer screening and vaccine status
- Healthcare utilization
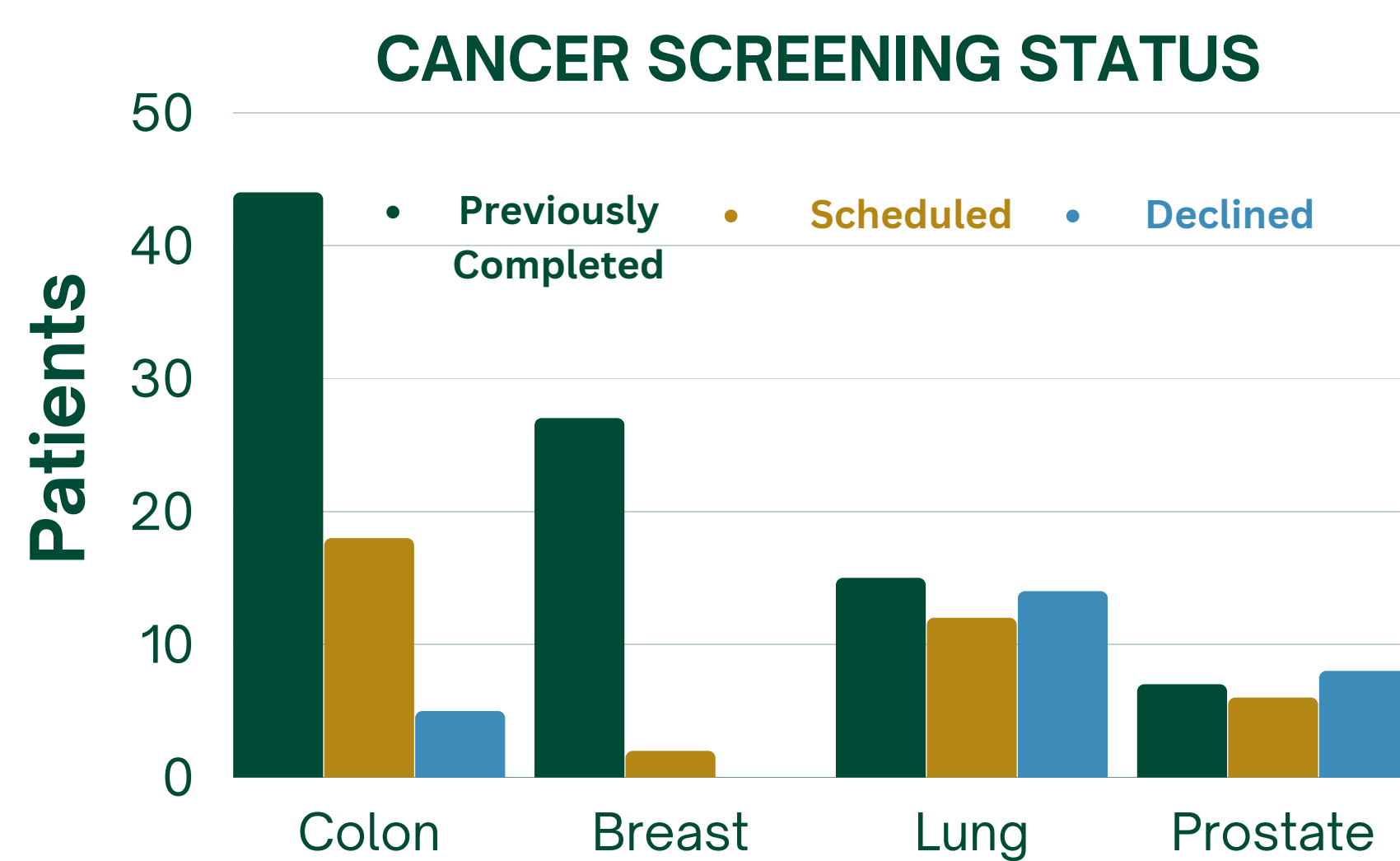- Alcohol and smoking assessment
- Depression and cognition screening

※ RN then collaborated with providers within and outside the clinic to facilitate referrals and follow-up appointments
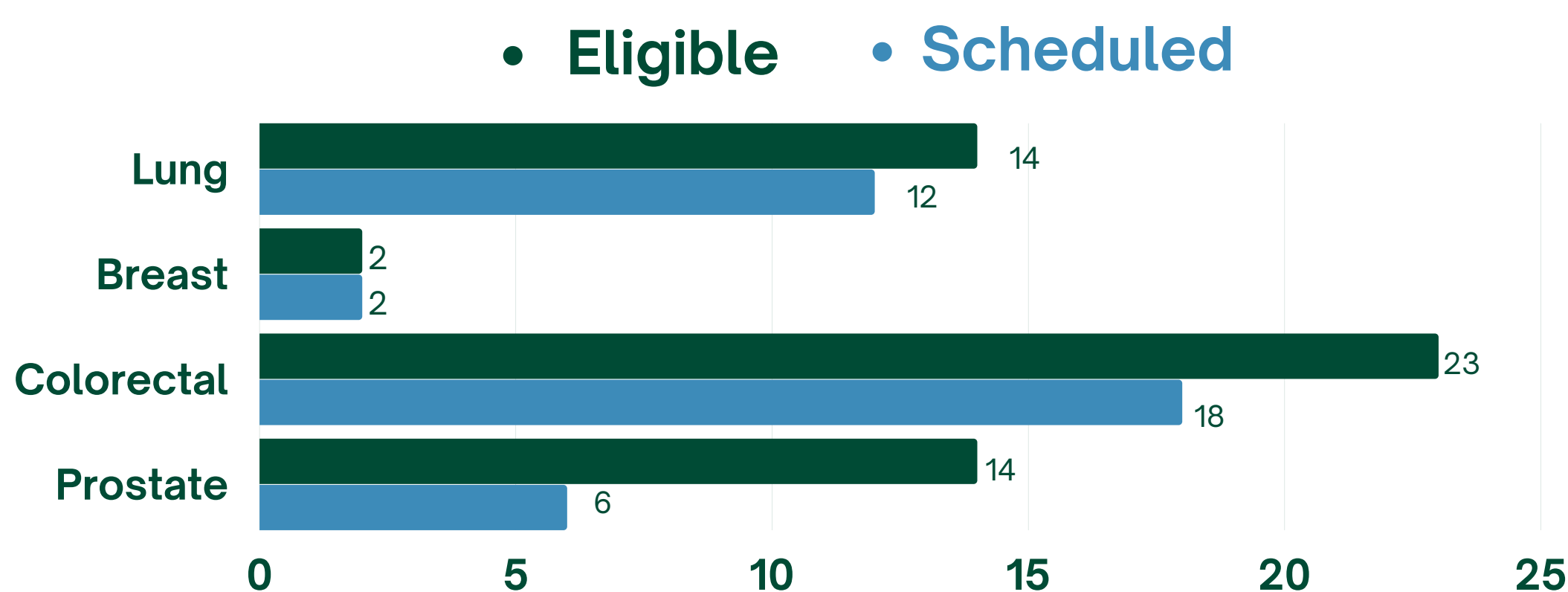
※ Other duties performed by RN included:
- Collaborate with primary care,
- Make referrals to specialty care,
- Monitor preventative care
- Provide individual and group education

OUTCOMES

CHAMPS assessments were used to determine if patients were up to date on cancer screenings, provide education, and schedule referrals as needed

CANCER SCREENING STATUS

Bar chart — Patients vs. Colon, Breast, Lung, Prostate. Legend: Previously Completed, Scheduled, Declined

CANCER SCREENING ELIGIBILITY AND REFERRALS MADE

Legend: ● Eligible ● Scheduled

- Lung: 14 / 12
- Breast: 2 / 2
- Colorectal: 23 / 18
- Prostate: 14 / 6

- Of the **14 patients** due for **lung cancer** screening, appointments were scheduled for **12 patients,** or **86%** of those due
- Of the **2 patients** due for a **mammogram**, appointments were scheduled for **2 patients**, or **100%** of those due
- Of the **23** patients due for a **colonoscopy**, appointments were scheduled for **18 patients**, or **78%** of those due
- Of the **14 patients** due for **prostate cancer** screenings, appointments were scheduled for **6 patients,** or **43%** of those due

OUTCOMES CONT.

- **32** Primary care appointments made
- **61** EKGs ordered
- **13** Dental appointments made
- **94** Patients screened for metabolic syndrome

Smoking Status

Pie chart: Current 25%, Never 50%, Former 25%

Of the 45 current and former smokers, 38% showed heavy to moderate nicotine dependence*

38%

*scored 5 or higher on Fagerstrom test

DISCUSSION

- Number of EKGs ordered demonstrates CHAMPS plays an important role in the care coordination required to meet this annual recommendation for patients on antipsychotic medication
- High utilization of cancer screening referrals demonstrates CHAMPS assessment as an effective intervention
- Some patients declined scheduling cancer screenings, due to remaining barriers such as transportation, other costs, and education
- More systematic method of collecting and reviewing health data at FTC to facilitate population based health management
- Smoking status data used to target patients for referrals to smoking cessation programs offered by FTC

Future directions

- Though scheduling screening appointments is a vital first step, we cannot be sure that every single appointment was attended as planned. This demonstrates the potential benefits of having expanded medical care capacity on site at community mental health centers, such as FTC
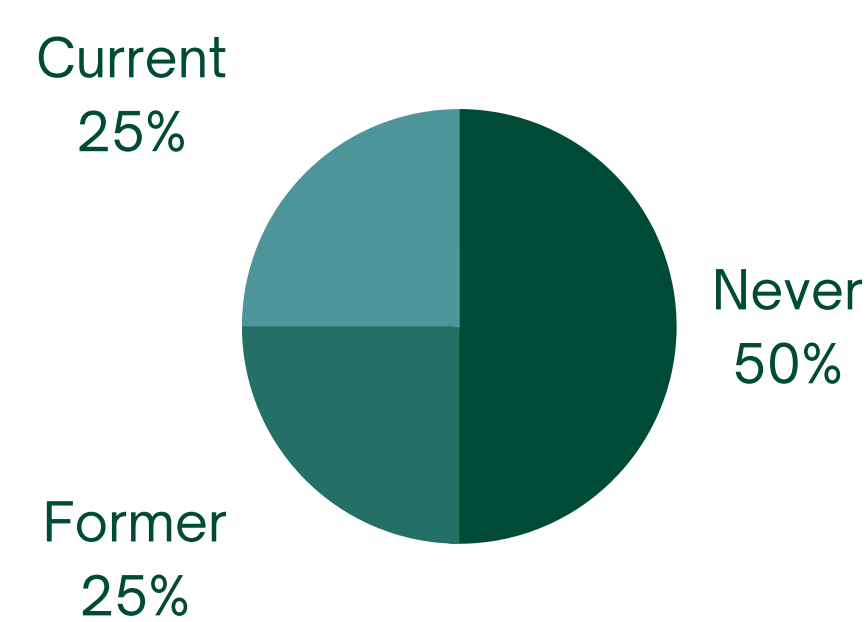
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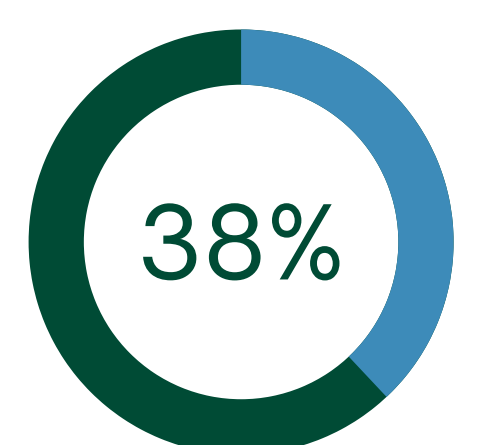4. Wildgust HJ, Hodgson R, Beary M. The paradox of premature mortality in schizophrenia: new research questions. J Psychopharmacol. 2010 Nov;24(4 Suppl):9-15.