



IMPROVING HEPATITIS C SCREENING IN ECU ADULT AND PEDIATRIC HEALTHCARE CLINIC (APHC)

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

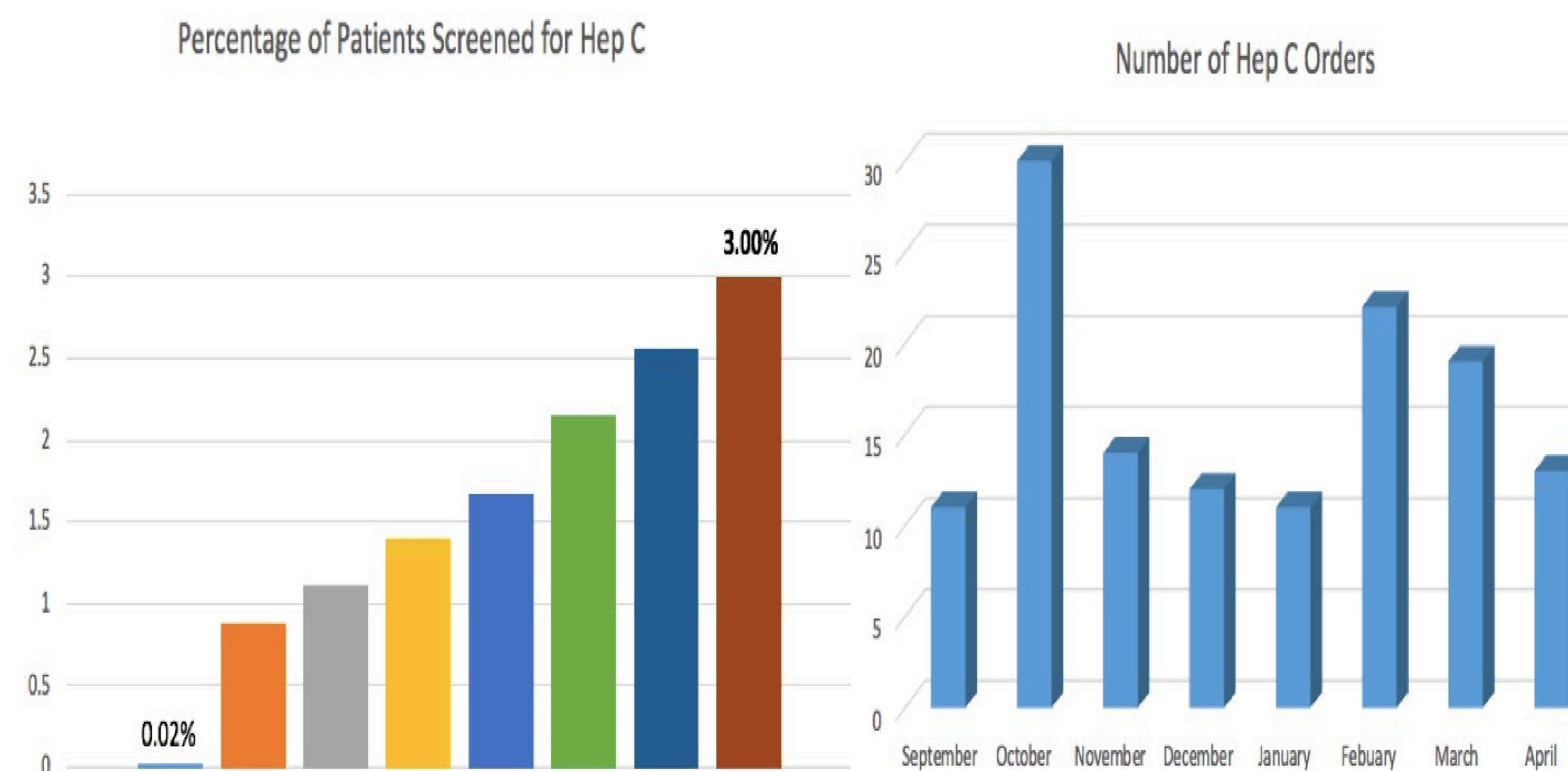
In March 2020, the US Preventive Services Taskforce updated their guidelines to recommend screening for Hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection in all adults aged 18 to 79 years with or without liver disease. Current studies show that Hepatitis C screening via established primary care providers minimizes care gaps and improves health outcomes. Current HCV treatments have revolutionized the therapeutic paradigm and have reduced complications of HCV such as cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma. We designed a quality improvement project to improve HCV screening in our Adult and Pediatric Healthcare Clinic (APHC).

AIM STATEMENT: By March 31, 2023, 20% of adults at APHC between the ages of 18 to 79 years of age will be screened once for HCV.

METHODS

We obtained baseline data to see how many patients we were screening for HCV and identified further patients that needed screening. Our baseline data showed that most of our eligible patients had been screened for HCV via one of 16 appropriate antibody tests for HCV. Our first PDSA cycle consisted of creating a ‘dotphrase’ which would check lab results for any HCV screening for a patient and suggest screening if no results populated. Our second PDSA cycle consisted of adding HCV lab to all Monday residents note templates. Our third PDSA cycle consisted of educating residents on the importance of HCV screening with prompting from precepting physicians during pre-clinic huddles. Our fourth PDSA cycle consisted of adding HCV reminder stickers on the computers in all the patient rooms

RESULTS:



In September 2023, only 0.02% of the eligible 4391 had been screened for Hep C. We improved this rate to 3% by March 2023 with our interventions. Between September 2022 and April 1, 2023, HCV screening tests were ordered.

DISCUSSION:

As a result of our interventions, we were able to improve our screening rate to 3% from a baseline of 0.02%. Our project shows that HCV screening can be increased by interventions in primary care clinics over a brief period. Our quality improvement project focused on lab screening and future projects can be designed considering treatment for positive screening results. Following completion of our project, HCV screening has now been added to the health maintenance tabs across ECU health clinics. Challenges we encountered during this project were lack of awareness of HCV treatment and complications associated with the disease. Creating HCV educational pocket cards highlighting the complications of HCV and the efficacy of modern treatments can help address these challenges

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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