



The Wingspan

ScreeND Newsletter

October 2026

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

As we enter Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we have an opportunity to remind the women we serve that early detection saves lives. Every conversation matters. Whether it is answering a patient's questions, making a recommendation during a visit or reaching out to someone who has not yet completed a recommended mammogram, your efforts help reduce barriers and connect women to potentially life-saving care.

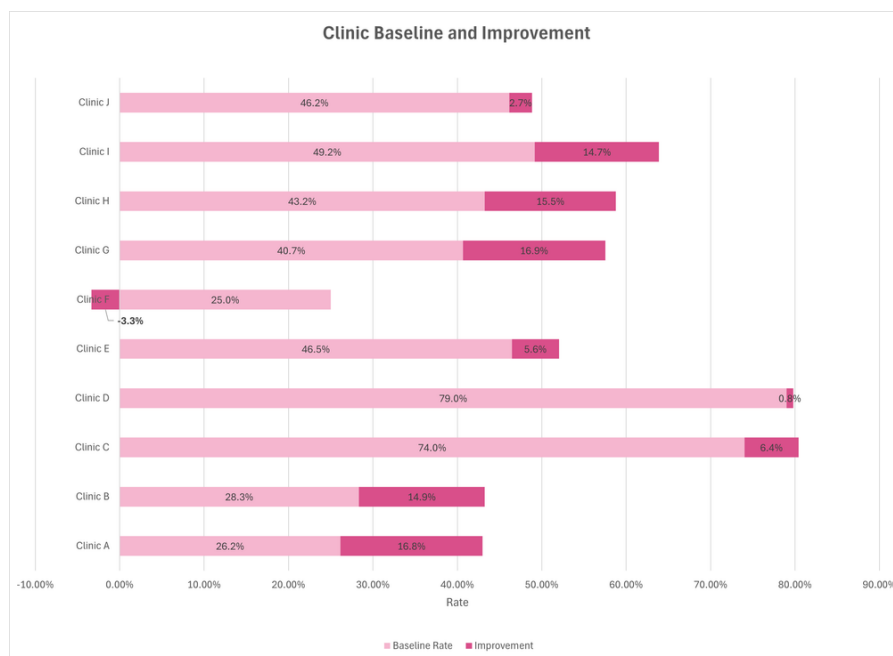
Patient-centered care means respecting patients' choices while ensuring they have the information they need to make those choices. A simple recommendation from a trusted healthcare team member can be the encouragement someone needs to take the next step toward screening.

Thank you for the work you do every day to improve cancer screening rates and support healthier communities.

DASHBOARD

Breast Cancer Screening Improvement to Date

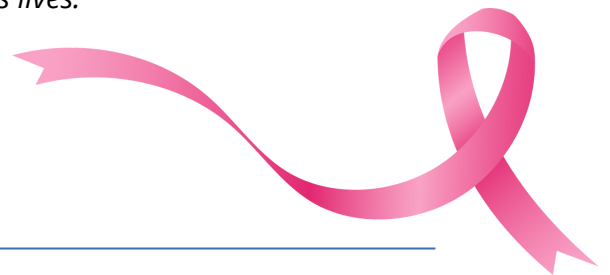
Ten clinics are currently participating in work to improve breast cancer screening rates through ScreeND. While each clinic began at a different starting point, the collective trend demonstrates meaningful progress toward increasing early detection opportunities for patients. Every percentage point increase represents more women receiving recommended screening and a greater opportunity to identify breast cancer at an earlier, more treatable stage.



Three Simple Ways to Promote Breast Cancer Awareness This Month

- 1 Reach out to patients with incomplete referrals:** Review referral lists and send reminders, make phone calls or discuss screening during upcoming visits with patients who have not yet completed their mammogram. Many women intend to schedule but simply need a reminder or assistance overcoming a barrier.
- 2 Start the conversation:** Ask eligible patients if they are up to date on their mammograms and provide a clear recommendation when screening is due. Research consistently shows that a provider recommendation is one of the strongest predictors of screening completion.
- 3 Make awareness visible:** Wear pink on a designated day, display breast cancer awareness materials, share screening facts in staff areas and ensure educational resources are readily available in waiting and exam rooms.

"Patients can decide whether to be screened, but they should never miss the opportunity to receive a recommendation. Awareness creates action, and action saves lives."



9 of 10 clinics improved



Largest increase: **+16.9** percentage points



5 clinics improved by more than 14 points



Highest current screening rate: **80%**



Clinic F is a new clinic; baseline reflects only one quarter of operations (12 eligible patients). **Performance trends will stabilize** as the patient population grows.

Women's Way is recognizing Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October.

Women's Way knows the importance each person plays in the quest to reduce the impact of breast cancer. Each person can share the message that **screening is essential** and can find cancer when it is in its earliest, most treatable stage.

We encourage partners to share key messaging and testimonials that can be found in our Breast Cancer Awareness Toolkit.

[View the toolkits.](#)



NEWS

The Power of a Recommendation

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is a timely reminder that while patients ultimately make their own healthcare decisions, healthcare teams play a critical role in ensuring those decisions are informed.

As screening improvement professionals, our goal is not to persuade every patient to say "yes." Our goal is to make sure every eligible patient receives a recommendation, understands why screening is important and has support navigating barriers that may stand in the way.

A provider recommendation remains one of the strongest influences on whether a patient completes a mammogram. Many women are not opposed to screening. They may be busy, uncertain about their risk, concerned about cost, worried about the procedure or simply waiting for reassurance from a trusted healthcare professional.

As one reminder puts it:

"The patient's choice begins with our invitation."

Patient-centered care means respecting individual decisions, but it does not mean withholding recommendations. In fact, informed choice depends on patients understanding what is recommended and why.

This October, consider a simple approach:

Recommend. Remind. Respect.

- Recommend evidence-based screening to every eligible patient.
- Explain why screening matters and how early detection saves lives.
- Address concerns and help patients overcome barriers to screening.
- Remind patients who have not completed a referral or are overdue for screening.
- Respect the decision each patient makes.

As we work to improve screening rates and reduce the burden of breast cancer in our communities, let's remember:

"Patient autonomy is not the absence of a recommendation. It's the freedom to choose after receiving one."

A poster may raise awareness. A recommendation, a conversation and a follow-up reminder can help turn awareness into action.

Why Patient Navigation Matters in Rural North Dakota

A 2024 study found that breast cancer screening rates declined as travel time to the second nearest hospital increased. For every additional 10 minutes of travel, the likelihood of receiving a mammogram decreased by 0.71 percentage points.

While the study focused on the rural South, these findings mirror challenges seen across rural North Dakota, where distance, transportation, time away from work and limited access to imaging services can make screening difficult. Patient navigation helps bridge the gap between a mammogram recommendation and completion by addressing barriers such as transportation, caregiving responsibilities, language, fear and health literacy. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends patient navigation as an effective strategy to increase cancer screening rates.

This October, consider asking: What might be standing between this patient and a completed mammogram, and how can we help?

Find the mammography service nearest you: [North Dakota Mammography Map](#)

Prevent Cancer Foundation: [Survey Reveals: Gen Z Doesn't Believe in Cancer Prevention](#)



Interested in trifold brochures about the support groups for your clinic or exam rooms? Contact Dr. Jesse Lindeman for copies at 701-888-9044 or info@ndcsf.org.

EVENTS

A Provider's Guide to Breast Density and Optimal Screening

Date: September 30, 2026

Time: 12-1 PM ET | 11 AM-12 PM CT

Format: Virtual

[Register](#)

Breast Cancer Screening: What to Know, What to Do

North Dakota Cancer Coalition and American Cancer Society (ACS) come together to bring you a Breast Cancer Awareness Webinar!

Speaker: Jill Klemin, MD

Date: September 24, 2026

Time: 12-1 PM CT

Format: Virtual Teams

Audience: Healthcare professionals

[Register](#)

New Prostate Cancer Toolkit for Primary Care Clinicians

Date: September 24, 2026

Speaker: Dr. Richard Wender, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine

Time: 2:30-3:30 PM CT

[Register](#)

Breast Cancer Screening: What to Know, What to Do.



September 24, 2026

12:00 to 1:00 p.m. CT

Featured Speaker:

Jill Klemin, MD
Sanford Health Bismarck

[Register Now](#)

Registration required

Please join us on Thursday September 24 at 12 PM Central Time for a live webinar to learn about average and high-risk breast cancer screening, breast density, interventions and assessment tools.

Mark your calendars and register for the virtual event.

Target Audience: Women's Way Providers, Clinicians, Nurses, Healthcare Professionals, Payers, Patient Navigators



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is now



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