



# Einstein Immunodeficiency Center - Cervical Cancer Screening Project

**Student Intern:** Tessa Palisoc, Drexel University College of Medicine

**Academic Preceptor:** Dr. Kristen Ryczak, MD, Drexel University College of Medicine

**Community Preceptor:** Nicola D'Souza, MPH, LSW, Einstein Immunodeficiency Center

## COMMUNITY PARTNER

### Einstein Immunodeficiency Center

Founded in 1994, the Einstein Immunodeficiency Center (IDC) is housed within Community Practice Center at Einstein Medical Center in Germantown, which is part of the Jefferson Health system. It is a Ryan White funded program. This clinic provides numerous services to adults living with HIV, including primary care, mental health counseling, nutrition counseling, and social work.



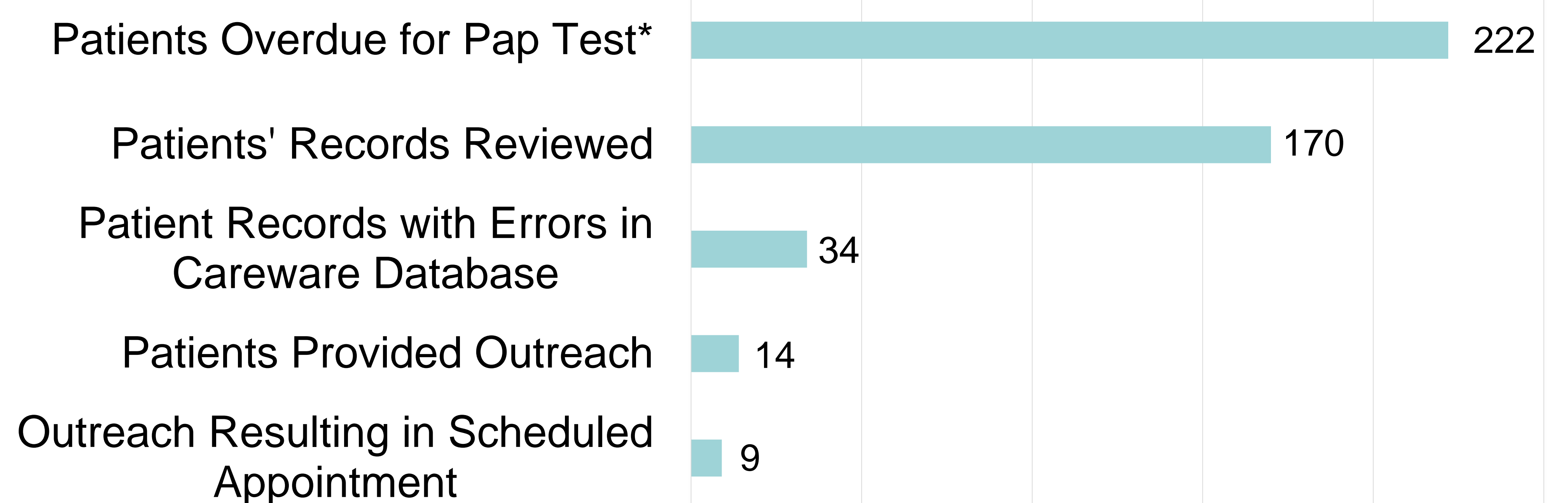
## BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

- People living with HIV are at increased risk of chronic HPV infection, which can lead to cervical cancer.<sup>1</sup>
- Current recommendations state that people living with HIV should receive cervical cancer screenings annually. The testing interval may be extended to 3 years after 3 consecutive negative screenings, within a year apart.
- The rate of cervical cancer screenings remains low. At IDC at the time this project began, only 23% of patients were reported as up-to-date for their Pap test.

## TEAM'S EXPERIENCE

This summer, the Bridging the Gaps intern worked within the IDC's Quality Improvement team to identify and provide outreach to patients who are due for their cervical cancer screenings. This project involved compiling data on individual patients, correcting database errors, and making outreach phone calls to patients. Outside of this project, the intern had the opportunity to attend webinars on HIV care and quality improvement.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS/CHALLENGES



\* Overdue by 7/31/2023, as of 6/23/2023

Percent of eligible patients with HIV who have had cervical cancer screening in the past year

Percent of eligible patients with HIV who have had cervical cancer screening in the past year, after data cleanup + Pap tests performed

23% → 30%

Challenges: patients' barriers to care include work schedules, childcare, mental illness, English competency, living situation, transportation, history of trauma, busy clinic schedules, stress, stigma, lack of emotional and/or social support

This data represents the project's progress as of 7/27/2023.

## REFLECTION

*"This summer was a fantastic, educational experience exploring the intersection between community medicine, public health, and social work. As someone who is interested in infectious disease, I am so glad I had the opportunity to learn about the needs and realities of people living with HIV in this community. I had the honor of observing how a clinic serves its patients, even when resources become limited or patients face substantial barriers to care. I came away from this internship feeling that I have made a small but present impact, and I am so grateful to have participated on this project. I am eager to move forward in my medical career with a greater understanding of care for vulnerable populations."*

### Citations

1. Ghebre RG, Grover S, Xu MJ, Chuang LT, Simonds H. Cervical cancer control in HIV-infected women: Past, present and future. *Gynecol Oncol Rep.* 2017 Jul 21;21:101-108. doi: 10.1016/j.gore.2017.07.009. PMID: 28819634; PMCID: PMC5548335.