

Longitudinal Study of COVID-19 Impact on Breast Cancer Screening in Northwest Indiana

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Background: During the COVID -19 pandemic, elective procedures such as mammography were suspended from late March to late April. Previous analyses done by Green and Han revealed that mammography screenings continued to be down in 2020 and 2021 from their baseline in 2019 prior to the pandemic. Continued efforts in monitoring how mammography screenings have been affected following the pandemic is crucial especially in understudied cities with predominantly black populations such as Gary, IN.

Methods: Data was provided from “Hospital A” on 22,693 mammography encounters and this data was analyzed to determine how mammography screenings have changed after the suspension period.

Results: Following the lift on the suspension of elective procedures on April 27, 2020, there was a sharp increase of mammograms the following 8 weeks to near pre-pandemic levels. However, after this 8-week post suspension period of elective procedures on April 27, 2020, the weekly average began to decrease starting at the beginning of 2021. The weekly average went from 171 (SD 21.9) mammograms in 2019 to 108 (SD 40.0) mammograms in 2021. Furthermore, the weekly average has continued to decrease in 2022 with 101 (SD 46.8) mammograms.

Conclusion: “Hospital A” successfully returned mammography procedures to pre-pandemic levels initially during the 8 weeks following the suspension on elective procedures. However, strategies should be implemented to mitigate the continuing decrease in mammography procedures following the COVID-19 pandemic.