



**screen smart**  
data • access • adherence

# **2025 Screening Dinner**

Advances in Colorectal Cancer Screening:  
The State of the Science

# Welcome

Dear Esteemed Colleagues,

Welcome to the 2025 Screen Smart Dinner, hosted by the Colorectal Cancer Alliance. We are honored to have you with us.

This initiative was born from your insights and shared vision. Many of you identified that the rapid innovation in early colorectal cancer (CRC) screening has created confusion among healthcare providers and patients alike complicated by the absence of head-to-head trials, inconsistent data, and limited robust, inclusive discussions around both current and emerging screening options.

In response, we launched the Screen Smart Initiative. It began with our 2024 dinner discussion, which brought together experts to examine CRC screening through the lens of data, adherence, and access. The resounding feedback was clear: this work must continue. And so, the Alliance committed to serving as a convener and thought leader—organizing data consistently and facilitating critical conversations across stakeholders to support informed decision-making.

Tonight is a continuation of that commitment. Your presence here is more than a gathering, it is a reflection of our collective mission to end colorectal cancer in our lifetime. Screening is the most effective way to prevent this disease or detect it early. Together, we aim to raise the screening rate to 80% and save 100,000 lives.

On behalf of our advisory committee, the Colorectal Cancer Alliance, our board, staff, volunteers, and the millions affected by CRC— thank you for your leadership, partnership, and unwavering dedication.

**Michael Sapienza**  
**CEO, Colorectal Cancer Alliance**  
Screen Smart Chair

# Agenda

**5:45-6:00pm**

## Welcome and Introduction

Remarks by: Michael Sapienza, Chief Executive Officer, Colorectal Cancer Alliance

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**6:00-6:20pm**

## Update on Screening Tests

Michael Sapienza, *Chief Executive Officer Colorectal Cancer Alliance*

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**6:30-7:00pm**

## Modeling Studies Framework

Dr. Uri Ladabaum, MD  
*Professor of Medicine, Director of the Gastrointestinal Cancer Prevention Program and Head of Clinical Service of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at Stanford University School of Medicine*

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**6:35-7:25pm**

## Adherence Panel

**What modeling studies tell us and what we still need to learn**

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**7:25-8:15pm**

## Access Panel

**The future of screening access and the United States Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF)**

Eric Waskowicz, *Senior Policy Manager, US of Care*

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**8:15-8:30pm**

## Closing and Next Steps

Michael Sapienza, *Chief Executive Officer Colorectal Cancer Alliance*

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**8:30-9:30pm**

## Cocktail Hour

## Panelists

- **Anu Dairkee, JD, MD**, Access Clinical Instructor, Health Law and Policy Clinic, Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation, Harvard Law School
- **Courtney Moreno, MD**, Professor in the Department of Radiology and Imaging Sciences at Emory University School of Medicine
- **Craig Eagle, MD**, Chief Medical Officer, Guardant
- **Dionne S. Christopher, PMP**, Director of Prevention, Colorectal Cancer Alliance
- **Durado Brooks MD, MPH**, Associate Chief Medical Officer, Exact Sciences
- **Ellen Riccobene, MD**, Vice President, Clinical Care Transformation, Independence Blue Cross
- **Eric Waskowicz**, Senior Policy Manager, US of Care
- **Erica Barnell, MD, PhD**, Chief Medical Officer and Co-Founder, Geneoscopy
- **Jimmy Lin, M.D., Ph.D., MHS**, Chief Scientific Officer, Freenome
- **Lee Dranikoff, JD**, Chief Executive Officer, Practical Strategy
- **Michael Sapienza**, Chief Executive Officer, Colorectal Cancer Alliance
- **Pam Traxel**, Senior Vice President, ACS CAN
- **Steven Itzkowitz, MD, FACP, FACG, AGAF**, Professor of Medicine, Oncological Sciences and Medical Education, Ichan School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
- **Todd W. Kelley, MD**, Chief Medical Officer, PolyMedco
- **T.R. Levin, MD, MS**, Associate Director for Cancer Research, KPNC Division of Research, The Permanente Medical Group, Inc.
- **Uri Ladabaum, MD, MS**, Professor of Medicine, Director of the Gastrointestinal Cancer Prevention Program and Head of Clinical Service of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at Stanford University School of Medicine

# Current Situation

Over the past several decades, research in colorectal cancer (CRC) prevention and early detection has led to the development of a growing number of screening modalities. In recent years, innovation in this space has rapidly accelerated, introducing new technologies and approaches. However, this progress has also created a complex and often confusing landscape for both healthcare professionals and patients. The proliferation of options—combined with limited head-to-head comparisons and inconsistent data—has made it more difficult to make informed decisions about screening. Additionally, new barriers have emerged around equitable access and adoption of the latest screening tests.

## Our Goals

To address these challenges, the Colorectal Cancer Alliance (The Alliance) launched Screen Smart—an initiative that convenes key stakeholders and thought leaders to share critical insights on colorectal cancer screening. Screen Smart is focused on three core goals:

- Clarify the screening landscape by sharing data-driven insights on current and emerging screening modalities.
- Improve access and adoption by identifying and addressing barriers to equitable implementation through expert panels and policy discussions.
- Enhance data-driven decision-making by disseminating timely information on test approvals, performance metrics, and pipeline developments to support providers and patients.

## Our Progress

In 2024, the Alliance hosted a pivotal dinner discussion at Digestive Disease Week (DDW), bringing together leaders from across the healthcare ecosystem to explore advances in CRC screening. The event centered on scientific data, persistent gaps, and systemic challenges affecting adoption and access.

## Key Outcomes from the 2024 Discussion:

- A synthesized data set and screening framework, developed in collaboration with:
  - Dr. Djenaba Joseph, MD, MPH – CAPT, U.S. Public Health Service; Chief, Program Services Branch, Division of Cancer Prevention and Control, CDC
  - Dr. Richard Wender – Past President, NCCRT; Professor & Chair, Family Medicine and Community Health, University of Pennsylvania
- A peer-reviewed literature article summarizing findings
- A dedicated web resource to support ongoing learning
- Presentation of findings at the NCCRT Annual Meeting
- Publication of the Screen Smart Brief

## 2025 Focus Areas

Building on the momentum of 2024, this year's event will center on:

- Innovation in Screening: Review of new technologies and regulatory updates, including expanded data mapped to the 2024 framework.
- Adherence Strategies: Insights from modeling studies—what they tell us about real-world behavior and where gaps remain.
- Access Challenges: A forward-looking conversation about the future of screening access, the evolving role of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), and perspectives from legal, policy, and healthcare experts.

## Looking Ahead

Through these efforts, the Alliance aims to generate actionable insights that empower healthcare providers with cutting-edge knowledge and equip patient advocates with the tools they need to drive improvements in screening access, adherence, and outcomes.

## Anu Dairkee, JD, MD

Access Clinical Instructor, Health Law and Policy  
Clinic, Center for Health Law and Policy  
Innovation, Harvard Law School



Anu Dairkee, JD is a clinical fellow on the Health Care Access team at the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation, a legal and policy clinic within Harvard Law School.

Anu's work focuses on health equity and access issues with areas of focus including using legal and policy levers to improve and expand access to preventive health care services; advocate for regulatory changes at both a federal and state level to prior authorization; and advocate for both more robust 1115 Medicaid waivers and the inclusion of people with lived experience of incarceration in their creation and implementation.

Anu's work on preventive care access has been published in the American Journal of Law and Medicine and she has presented at several national conferences on the importance of free access to preventive care and role of the preventive care rule of the Affordable Care Act in improving health outcomes particularly for chronic conditions.

Anu has also co-authored two amicus (friends of the court) briefs for a case before the US Supreme Court which threatens continued free access to a number of preventive care services.

Prior to her career in law, Anu was a physician. She brings her knowledge and experiences from medicine to her work as a health lawyer in the hopes that the intersection of both can help move the needle towards better health care outcomes in the United States.

## Courtney Moreno, MD

Professor in the Department of Radiology and Imaging Sciences at Emory University School of Medicine



Dr. Courtney C. Moreno is a Professor of Radiology and the Director of the Abdominal Imaging Division in the Department of Radiology & Imaging Sciences of the Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia.

Dr. Moreno is a member of the American College of Radiology's (ACR) Colon Cancer Committee and is Chair of the ACR's CT Colonography Reporting and Data System (C-RADS) Committee.



## **Craig Eagle, MD**

Chief Medical Officer  
Guardant



Dr. Craig Eagle currently serves as Guardant Health's Chief Medical Officer. Prior to joining Guardant Health, Dr. Eagle served as Vice President of Medical Affairs Oncology for Genentech, where he oversaw the medical programs across the oncology portfolio and developed innovative cancer trials and strategies in personalized health care.

Prior to Genentech, Dr. Eagle has held several positions in the U.S. and internationally over his 19-year career at Pfizer including global head of the Oncology Medical and Outcomes Group. In this role, he oversaw the worldwide medical programs and development of numerous commercially successful drugs. Dr. Eagle currently serves on the Board of Directors for Generex Biotechnology and NuGenerex Immuno-Oncology.

Dr. Eagle attended medical school at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia and received his general internist training at Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney. Dr. Eagle completed his specialist training in hemato-oncology and laboratory hematology at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney and was granted Fellowship in the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (FRACP) and the Royal College of Pathologists Australasia (FRCPA).

# **Dionne S. Christopher, PMP**

Director of Prevention  
Colorectal Cancer Alliance



Ms. Christopher is a seasoned public health leader and the Director of Prevention at the Colorectal Cancer Alliance. In this role, she leads the strategic design, implementation, and evaluation of national initiatives aimed at preventing colorectal cancer. Her work centers on advancing equitable access to screening, enhancing health education, and strengthening advocacy efforts for underserved communities.

Through collaboration with internal teams, community organizations, healthcare providers, and policymakers, she champions evidence-based interventions that drive early detection and reduce health disparities.

Before stepping into her current position, Dionne served as the Senior Program Manager for Screening and Prevention at the Colorectal Cancer Alliance. There, she cultivated strategic partnerships and launched initiatives that significantly advanced the organization's mission to increase screening participation and save lives.

Her career in cancer prevention spans more than 15+ years at the American Cancer Society, where she served as a Project Manager for both the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable and the National Lung Cancer Roundtable. In these roles, she played an instrumental part in developing national resources and fostering collaboration among key stakeholders to accelerate progress in cancer control.

Beyond her national contributions, Dionne has been an active member of advisory boards throughout the metropolitan Atlanta area. Her background in program management, community engagement, and partnership development gives her a deep understanding of the systemic challenges impacting health equity across diverse populations.

Dionne holds a bachelor's degree in human resources management from Saint Leo University and is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP).



## **Durado Brooks MD, MPH**

Associate Chief Medical Officer  
Exact Sciences



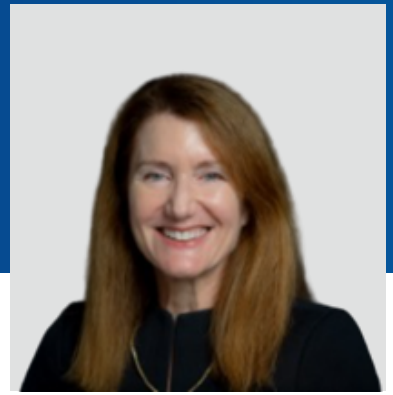
Durado Brooks, MD, MPH is the Associate Chief Medical Officer for Screening at the Exact Sciences Corporation, where he provides clinical and health equity-related input to multidisciplinary teams across the organization and serves as a liaison for scientifically driven engagements with external groups.

Prior to joining Exact Sciences, Dr. Brooks spent 20 years with the American Cancer Society, working to increase access to high quality prevention and screening and to decrease cancer-related inequities through the design, implementation and evaluation of cancer prevention and early detection programs at the national, state and local level.

Dr. Brooks formerly practiced primary care internal medicine and served as medical director for Federally Qualified Health Centers and hospital-affiliated health centers in Dayton, Ohio and in the Community Oriented Primary Care Program at Parkland Memorial Hospital in his current hometown of Dallas, Texas.

## **Ellen Riccobene, MD**

Vice President, Clinical Care Transformation  
Independence Blue Cross



Dr. Ellen Riccobene, a board-certified internist, is the Vice President for Clinical Care Transformation (CCT) at Independence Blue Cross, Philadelphia, Pa. The CCT team focuses on maintaining a high quality network and creating innovative and data driven clinical care delivery models to achieve the Institute of Healthcare Improvement's Quintuple Aim, quality outcomes, cost efficient medical care, improved provider and patient experience, and equitable whole-person e health.

Ellen is a graduate of Georgetown Medical School and Residency Program and has been at Independence for 17 years.

## **Eric Waskowicz**

Senior Policy Manager  
US of Care



Eric Waskowicz brings top-tier expertise building USofCare's state-level policy portfolio. He previously led the American Academy of Family Physicians' Center for State Policy, where he worked with 57 state or state equivalent chapters to advance policies to champion family physicians and their patients in the states. Prior to that, Eric worked as Legislative Correspondent for U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen, focusing on health care, energy, and environmental issues.

## **Erica Barnell, MD, PhD**

Chief Medical Officer and Co-Founder  
Geneoscopy



Dr. Erica Barnell is the co-founder and Chief Medical & Science Officer of Geneoscopy. She earned her MD/PhD at Washington University School of Medicine in 2023, completing her doctoral work in Molecular Genetics and Genomics from the McDonnell Genome Institute.

Dr. Barnell spearheaded the clinical and regulatory development of ColoSense®, Geneoscopy's flagship diagnostic, and the first FDA-approved RNA-based stool test for colorectal cancer screening in adults aged 45 and older.

Dr. Barnell's work extends beyond colorectal cancer, advancing the application of non-invasive stool RNA technology to monitor disease activity and predict therapeutic response in inflammatory bowel disease. A recognized leader in precision medicine and an advocate for health equity, Dr. Barnell holds multiple patents and has authored numerous peer-reviewed publications. She was named to Forbes' 30 Under 30 in 2020, and is a frequent speaker on innovation, leadership, and championing women in STEM.

# Jimmy Lin, M.D., Ph.D., MHS

Chief Scientific Officer  
Freenome



In his role as Freenome's Chief Scientific Officer, Jimmy is responsible for scientific strategy, research operations, and growth of the company's world-class scientific team. He brings a proven record of translating cutting-edge research into commercial success, with a focus on the development and launch of blood-based assays for cancer monitoring and detection of molecular residual disease.

Prior to joining the private sector, as Chief Scientific Officer for Oncology at Natera, the global genomic diagnostics company, Jimmy led the intramural clinical genomics program at the National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health. At Johns Hopkins University and Washington University in St. Louis, he spearheaded the computational analyses of the first-ever exome sequencing studies in multiple cancer types.

Jimmy holds an M.D. and a Ph.D. in Cellular and Molecular Medicine from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, as well as a Master of Health Sciences in Bioinformatics from Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. As an undergraduate at Yale University, he majored in Cognitive Science and Molecular Biophysics & Biochemistry. Jimmy was a 2016 Senior TED Fellow and is the Founder and President of the Rare Genomics Institute.

# Lee Dranikoff, JD

Chief Executive Officer  
Practical Strategy



Lee Dranikoff is the past Chair of the Board of the Colorectal Cancer Alliance. Lee also founded the March Forth initiative to drive national screening rates.

Professionally, Lee is the founder of The Op Academy, a boutique educational training company focused on the private equity industry. Prior to that, Lee was a Managing Director at American Securities, where he helped build and lead the American Securities Resources Group. Lee started his business career at McKinsey & Co.

Lee graduated from Johns Hopkins University with a B.A. and M.A. in Economics and graduated with a J.D. cum laude from Harvard Law School.



# Michael Sapienza

## Chief Executive Officer Colorectal Cancer Alliance



Michael Sapienza is the Chief Executive Officer of the Colorectal Cancer Alliance (Alliance), the leading colon and rectal cancer advocacy group in the country. He lost his mother to colorectal cancer in May 2009. He turned his profound grief into action, inspiring and challenging the colorectal cancer community, family, friends, and professional associates to follow his lead and dedicate themselves to ending colorectal cancer within our lifetime - the mission of the Alliance. Michael founded The Chris4Life Colon Cancer Foundation and served as its President from 2010-2015. In 2016, he led the team that merged the Foundation and the Colon Cancer Alliance, creating the nation's largest colon cancer specific nonprofit, which changed its name to Colorectal Cancer Alliance in 2017 to embrace both the colon and rectal cancer communities.

Michael has become an expert and trusted voice on the topics of colorectal cancer prevention, patient care, and medical research. Michael regularly appears on TV and radio programs throughout the United States, including NBC's TODAY show. He is frequently quoted in national publications such as USA Today, Newsweek, and The New York Times, promoting awareness and the importance of increased funding for colorectal cancer research and early detection. As co-chair of Project Cure CRC, Michael helps spearhead the Alliance's \$100 million commitment to fund critically needed innovative colorectal cancer research - the largest philanthropic investment in CRC history. In that role, he is also driving the development of a dynamic portal to improve patient outcomes through BlueHQ.org. To help increase prevention awareness, Michael led the Alliance in a partnership with Ryan Reynolds and his marketing agency Maximum Effort to launch LEAD FROM BEHIND, a creative initiative featuring entertainment and sports celebrities in videos that educate and reduce the stigma associated with colorectal cancer screening.

Michael is a member of The Ruesch Center for the Cure of GI Cancer's Advisory Board at Georgetown University, and in 2020 he was appointed to the President's Cancer Panel and NCCRT's 2021 Steering Committee. Michael has received several prestigious industry awards including David Jagelman, MD Award for advocacy in Colorectal Cancer Awareness by the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons; the Public Service Award from the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract; and the Champion Award from Preventing Colorectal Cancer. Michael was honored with a Luminary Award from OncLive and The Ruesch Center for his lifetime commitment to improving the lives of patients affected by gastrointestinal cancer.

# **Pam Traxel**

Senior Vice President  
ACS CAN



Pam Traxel serves as the Senior Vice President for ACS CAN, the advocacy affiliate of the America Cancer Society.

Pam is responsible for helping ACS CAN develop relationships with companies and individuals to help further the fight against cancer through dynamic partnerships, events, and forums. Pam began her career with ACS CAN in 2007. She has been integrally involved in helping to establish ACS CAN as a nationwide advocacy organization that influences and shapes public policy at all levels of government to impact our mission and to represent the voices of all cancer patients and their families.

# Steven Itzkowitz, MD, FACP, FACG, AGAF

Professor of Medicine, Oncological Sciences and Medical Education, Ichan School of Medicine at Mount Sinai



Steven H. Itzkowitz, M.D. is Professor of Medicine, Oncological Sciences, and Medical Education at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. He is current Chair of the American Cancer Society National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable, past Chair of the Gastrointestinal Oncology Section of the American Gastroenterological Association, past President of the New York Gastroenterological Association, immediate past Co-Chair of the New York Citywide Colon Cancer Control Coalition (C5). He is a recipient of a distinguished Jacobi Medallion from the Mount Sinai School of Medicine and a Gold Humanism Award. As a past Director of the Mount Sinai GI Fellowship Program for 23 years, Dr. Itzkowitz has mentored and developed the careers of scores of GI fellows, residents, students, graduate students, and junior faculty.

Dr. Itzkowitz has served as a Study Section member for the National Cancer Institute, Veteran's Affairs Merit Review Board, Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America, and US-Israel Binational Science Foundation, and as an editor of the International Journal of Colorectal Disease, and Gut and Liver, and associate editor of Inflammatory Bowel Diseases, Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology, and Gastric Cancer.

His team was among the first to prove the effectiveness of patient navigation for increasing screening colonoscopy rates among underserved residents of East Harlem. Dr. Itzkowitz's research interests are in the field of gastrointestinal cancer screening and prevention among average-risk and high-risk individuals. His clinical studies have focused on reducing racial/ethnic disparities in colon cancer screening, developing new non-invasive stool DNA tests for colon cancer, and detecting and preventing colon cancer in inflammatory bowel disease.

**Todd W. Kelley, MD**  
Chief Medical Officer  
PolyMedco



Dr. Kelley received M.S. and M.D. degrees from Ohio State University followed by Residency and Fellowship training at the Cleveland Clinic. He is board certified in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology and Hematopathology.

Previously, he was a tenured Associate Professor of Pathology at the University of Utah and Medical Director of Hematopathology and Co-scientific Director of Next Generation Sequencing and Biocomputing at ARUP Laboratories. Just prior to joining Polymedco, he was Executive Director of Medical Affairs at Biofidelity, a UK-based genomic startup company focused on non-small cell lung cancer testing.

He has published over 70 research articles, reviews, and book chapters and is active in many professional societies including: the Association for Molecular Pathology and the American Society of Hematology.

## **T.R. Levin, MD, MS**

Associate Director for Cancer Research, KPNC  
Division of Research  
The Permanente Medical Group, Inc.



Theodore R. Levin, MD, MS is a Research Scientist III at the Kaiser Permanente, Northern California Division of Research and Associate Director for the Cancer section. Dr. Levin is also a Professor of Health System Science at the Kaiser Permanente School of Medicine and a Staff Gastroenterologist at the Kaiser Permanente Walnut Creek Medical Center. He is the Clinical Lead for Colorectal Cancer Screening and Assistant Chair of Gastroenterology for The Permanente Medical Group.

Dr. Levin's research interests include health services and outcomes research in gastroenterology and population health. Particular areas of interest are colorectal cancer screening with colonoscopy, fecal immunochemical tests, fecal DNA tests, and blood-based screening tests.

## Uri Ladabaum, MD, MS

Professor of Medicine, Director of the Gastrointestinal Cancer Prevention Program and Head of Clinical Service of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at Stanford University School of Medicine



Uri Ladabaum, MD, MS serves as director of the Gastrointestinal Cancer Prevention Program and heads the Clinical Service of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at Stanford University School of Medicine. Dr. Ladabaum received his medical degree from the University of California, San Francisco, completed his residency and chief residency in internal medicine at Stanford University Hospital, and fellowship in gastroenterology and MS in clinical research design and statistical analysis at the University of Michigan.

Dr. Ladabaum's clinical efforts include providing consultation and endoscopic services for persons at average risk or high risk for cancer and caring for patients and families with suspected or established inherited cancer predisposition syndromes.

Dr. Ladabaum's research focus is gastrointestinal cancer risk management and prevention, especially colorectal cancer. His current and recent areas of investigation include optimization of screening, novel screening tests, personalization, programmatic effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, quality monitoring and assurance in endoscopy, and computer-aided endoscopy.



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