Healthcare Policy Committee Background
SGNA’s Healthcare Policy committee was established in 2012, as part of the 2012-2014 strategic plan. The SGNA Board of Directors identified influencing policy as a key goal based on the organization’s mission to advance the science and practice of gastroenterology and endoscopy nursing through education, research, advocacy, and collaboration.

Purpose/Goals
The purpose of the Healthcare Policy Committee is to support SGNA’s efforts to actively influence policy regarding colorectal cancer awareness, infection prevention and sedation administration by working with collaborative partners. SGNA’s strategic goal 2 Quality Care goes well with the committee’s purpose. Goal 2 states SGNA will drive the quality of care in areas of infection prevention, sedation and changes to the health care system related to quality issues and reimbursement.

Objectives
SGNA Healthcare Policy Committee’s objectives are to promote awareness, coordinate efforts with partner organizations, and participate in educational events supporting colorectal cancer awareness, infection prevention and sedation administration. This year the Committee’s focus was to revise the colorectal cancer screening and awareness policy. We also developed a new Infection Prevention Policy Statement and started work on a Sedation Policy Statement.

Conclusion
Over the last three years engaging our members at the regional level has been our most powerful tools to influence policy regarding colorectal cancer awareness, infection prevention and sedation administration. Our committee has done this through engaging Regional Liaisons, promoting Healthcare issues via social media, SGNA app, and presentations.

Infection Prevention Policy Statement
The Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates (SGNA), a professional organization of nurses and associates dedicated to the safe and effective practice of gastroenterology and endoscopy nursing, is committed to proper infection control and prevention measures to be used for all settings where gastroenterology is practiced. It is estimated that 7% of all patients admitted to the hospital develop a hospital-acquired infection resulting in several thousand patients dying annually. To reduce the number of infections and deaths, SGNA recommends adhering to SGNA and other Gastroenterology organizations’ evidence-based guidelines that seek to eliminate infections via gastrointestinal endoscopes. SGNA has instituted a nationwide Infection Prevention Champions Program to provide evidenced-based procedural resources that will ensure safety from infections throughout the gastroenterology and endoscopy experience. SGNA’s goal is for each medical facility across the country to participate in the Infection Prevention Champion program by enrolling a team leader as a Champion that acts as the link to current infection prevention news and guidelines, ensuring current and safe practices are implemented. SGNA remains steadfast in its commitment to high quality patient care. SGNA members continuously advocate for the use of effective infection prevention guidelines and raise awareness about the need of proper training and education in infection prevention when performing or assisting with gastrointestinal endoscopic procedures.

For more information on SGNA Legislative Initiatives go to the SGNA website www.sgna.org.

The Mold
SGNA Healthcare Policy Committee
Katherine Vinci, RNC CGRN, Committee Member

Priority Partner Organizations
1 ASGE- American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy
2 NCCRT- National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable
3 DDNC- Digestive Disease National Coalition
4 Prevent Cancer Foundation- Dialogue for Action
5 ECAN- Esophageal Cancer Action Network
6 NIDDK- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease

SGNA Position Statement Colorectal Cancer Screening and Awareness

Disclaimer
The Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates, Inc. (SGNA) assumes no responsibility for the practices or recommendations of any member or other practitioner, or for the policies and procedures of any practice setting. Nurses and associates function within the limitations of license, state nurse practice act, and/or institutional policy.

Statement
The Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates (SGNA), a professional organization of nurses and associates dedicated to the safe and effective practice of gastroenterology and endoscopy nursing, is committed to eradicating colorectal cancer by increasing colorectal cancer screening rates for all people.

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer in men and women in the United States, and is the second leading cause of cancer death. A cancer that starts in the colon or rectum, colorectal cancer often begins as a growth called a polyp. Finding polyps and/or growths during screening colonoscopies can help prevent colorectal cancer related deaths.

SGNA encourages its membership to continue the important work of spreading awareness to the public on the necessity of timely colorectal cancer screening. Patients continue to seek out nurses for information about health concerns and navigating the healthcare system. It is known that awareness and education can increase colorectal screening rates, as is illustrated by a 20.7% increase in screenings over the last 10 years.

Evidence suggests that earlier diagnosis correlates with a greater chance of survival. The 5-year survival rate of a colorectal cancer patient diagnosed in the early stages is about 90%. To that end, SGNA supports legislative efforts at the federal level that focus on removing barriers to colorectal screening and effective, affordable treatment options. Additionally, SGNA supports more colorectal cancer screening and awareness activities, in collaboration with government agencies, healthcare organizations, physicians, and supporting partners.

About SGNA
The Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates is a professional organization of nurses and associates dedicated to the safe and effective practice of gastroenterology and endoscopy nursing. SGNA carries out its mission by advancing the science and practice of gastroenterology and endoscopy nursing through education, research, advocacy, and collaboration, and by promoting the professional development of its members in an atmosphere of mutual support.

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