

INTRO

- Telegenetics services have grown significantly over the past decade; however utilization is often tied to a specific program that seeks to solve a focused problem (e.g. increasing access in a state with a large rural population) or meet a commercial need (e.g. post-test counseling available from a laboratory for patients utilizing their test).
- In addition to program specific services Genome Medical also offers self referrals for any medical indication, including proactive screening.

METHODS

- Referral indication, referral source and decision to pursue genetic testing self referred patients seen from January 2017 to February 2019 were queried.
- Patients either self scheduled online or called in to schedule and could opt to see a board certified genetic counseling either by telephone or a HIPPA compliant video platform. Indication and referral source were collected prior to the session.

DISCUSSION

There is an increasing interest in genetic services driven by patients themselves, both with and without medical indication. Although genetic counseling via secure video platform may more closely mirror traditional genetic counseling, patients in some referral channels continue to desire phone based counseling. Whether this persistent desire is based on technological limitations or insecurities or if there is a desire on the part of patients for increased anonymity offered by phone is an area for future study. Finally, the observed uptake of genetic testing among individuals seeking proactive services suggests that even among those who have an a priori interest in genetic testing, genetic counseling can help clarify risks, benefits and limitations of testing and may influence test decision making.

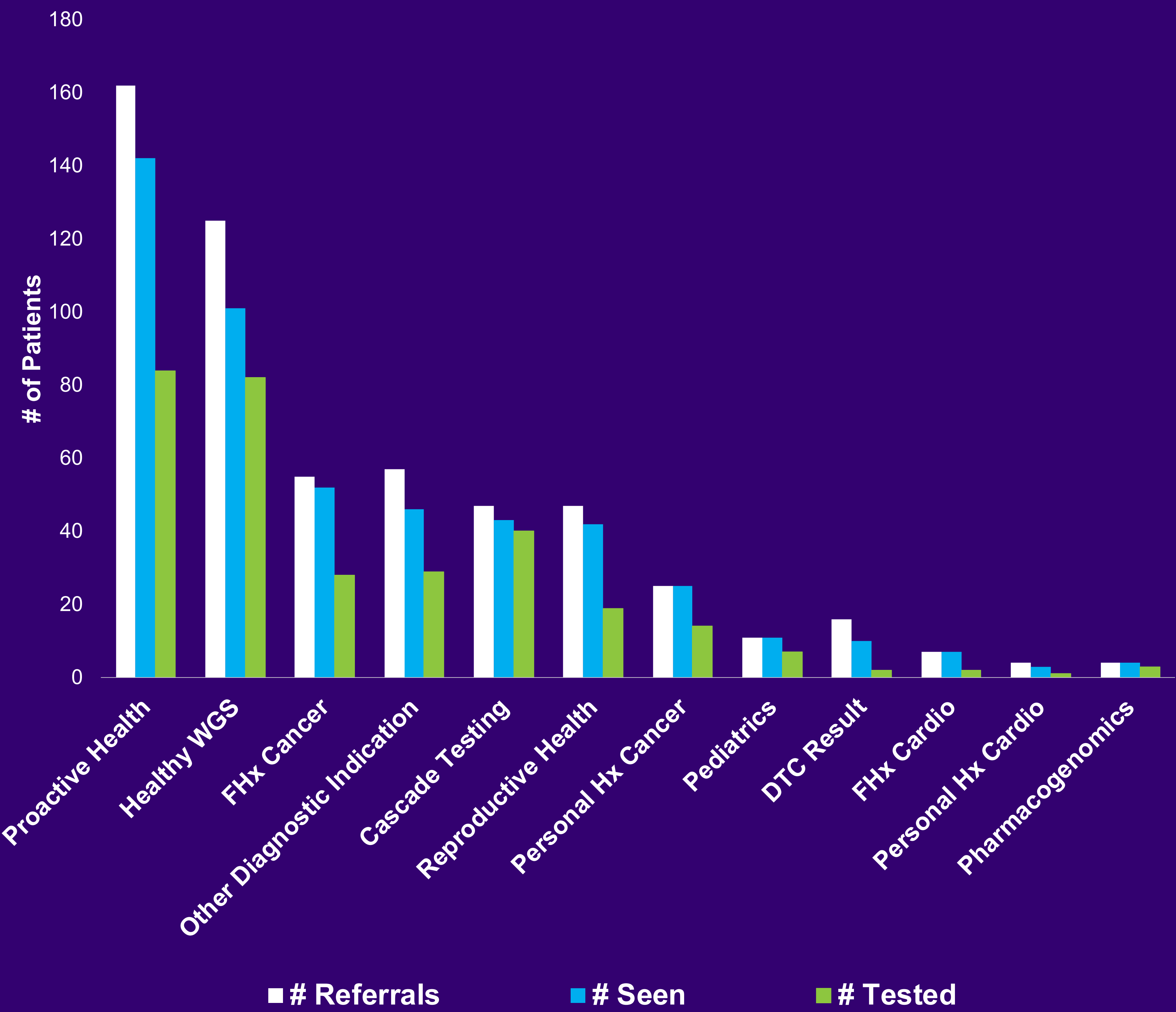
Open the Door and See Who Comes In:
Who Self-Refers to Telegenetics Services?

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Patients who self-referred to telegenetic counseling most often self-referred to seek proactive genetic screening options.

Pursuit of genetic testing varied from 20% to 93% depending on the referral reason with no clear trend towards more or less testing among those seeking proactive health services compared to those seeking care for a medical indication.

Referral Reason and Decision to Test Among Self-Referred Patients



RESULTS



Primary sources for self-referrals included:

- Institutions (e.g. Illumina’s Understand Your Genome Program, Perkin Elmer’s Viacord Program)
- Employers (e.g. Illumina, Perkin Elmer)
- Advocacy groups (e.g. Batten Disease Support and Research Association)
- Genome Medical website/Word of Mouth

Average patient age: 41

Communication Preference

