

[P-368E] Cost analysis of the 90 day fill system

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Veterans Administration (VA) San Diego Healthcare System dispenses medications in a 90 day supply to decrease filling and mailing costs when compared to providing a 30 day medication fill. There are obvious concerns associated with a 90 day fill. Providing a 90 day supply may be wasteful in circumstances where medications are discontinued early in treatment. There is also a risk that the patient may continue to use a medication after discontinuation. We conducted a study to determine whether potential cost savings realized utilizing a 90 day fill offset the expense of possible drug waste and health risks. This randomized, prospective study evaluated 346 new and refill prescriptions, comparing 90 day prescription supplies to 3 30 day supplies. Results indicate that dispensing medications in 90 day supplies saved \$6.17 per prescription. Seventeen prescriptions (4.91%) were discontinued during the study. Patients were contacted by telephone to assess their understanding of changes made to their prescriptions. All patients who were contacted understood the changes that had occurred. Fifty-four patients (30%) were contacted by telephone to assess their satisfaction with the 90 day prescription fill system, and all patients indicated they were either satisfied or very satisfied. This study confirms that providing patients with a 90 day supply of medication resulted in cost savings for the health care system while maintaining good patient satisfaction with service.