

[MCS-11] Pharmacists' clinical interventions as a tool to improve patient outcomes in the veteran population

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The role of the pharmacist in patient care has traditionally been reactive after the prescription is written. Our staff pharmacists are currently assigned to review medication profiles of veterans prior to primary care clinic visits. Therefore, the clinical expertise of the pharmacist is not utilized when it would be most useful, which is at the time of prescribing. The impact of the pharmacist may be considerably greater by providing input earlier into the decision making process. The objective of the project is to assess the impact of pharmacist participation in the primary care clinic on rate of preventable medication misadventures. Through the expansion of our current clinical intervention program, the pharmacy will see an enhancement in this quality measurement as well as a greater cost avoidance. A clinical software package will be utilized for monitoring progress and outcomes of the project. A successful result will be interpreted as an overall decrease in preventable adverse drug events, increase in the number of accepted interventions, higher compliance with drug utilization protocols, and an overall increase in cost avoidance due to interventions. It is anticipated that this program can be easily implemented at other facilities with ambulatory care clinics.

Learning objectives: 1. Describe the traditional role of the pharmacist in the ambulatory care setting. 2. Discuss the impact of pharmacist participation in the clinic. 3. Identify one outcome measure that is associated with pharmacists' clinical interventions.

Self assessment questions: True or false: 1. The clinical expertise of the pharmacist is most useful after the prescription is written. 2. Clinical interventions by pharmacists can impact patient care. 3. A successful result of clinical interventions can be an overall decrease in medication misadventures.

Answers: 1. F; 2. T; 3. T.