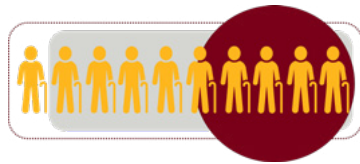


Precepting Tips for Medication Self-Management



Overview

- Prevalence and Risk Factors:



89% of older adults report taking a prescription medication regularly. 54% of those individuals take four or more medications.

Polypharmacy can increase the risk of adverse drug events and drug interactions, contribute to declines in taking and managing medications, and increase healthcare costs.

- **Impact:** The economic impact of the unfortunate, unintended, and preventable consequences of medication use (known as drug-related morbidity and mortality) is **\$528 billion** annually.
- **Solution:** The use of a 4-step process and the application of lessons learned from individuals who successfully manage their medications can serve as an answer to the urgent need to simplify medication use for older adults.



The 4-step Process Approach to Effective Medication Self-Management

Older adults and their families can benefit from a systematic framework for creating a medication self-management plan that fits their lifestyle. That framework contains four key elements:

1. **Intended use** of each medication. What is the medical reason for taking each medication?
2. **Effectiveness** of each medication. What are the specific and anticipated benefits for each medication?
3. **Safety.** What are the safety concerns specific to the person's unique mix of medical conditions, medications, physiologic changes and socioeconomic factors?
4. **Convenience of use.** What are the challenges a patient is experiencing in terms of taking each medication as intended to achieve their goals of therapy and affording their medications?

Key Resources for Interprofessional Teams to Use Within Each Step of the 4-step Process for Effective Medication Self-Management

1 **Intended Use:** Helping older persons understand the intended use of each of their medications

- [Drugs with FDA-approved indications](#)
- [Drugs with evidence-based indications that are not FDA-approved](#) ('off label use')
- [Determining whether a need still exists to continue taking a medication](#) ('deprescribing')

2 **Effectiveness:** Helping older persons determine if their medications are working for them

- [Establishing SMART goals of therapy](#)
- [Drug treatment goals in clinical practice guidelines](#)

3

Safety: Helping older persons understand the medication safety concerns specific to them

- [Start Low and Go Slow](#)
- [Beers List to Assess Potentially Inappropriate Medications in Older Adults](#)
- [STOPP/START Criteria for Potentially Inappropriate Prescribing in Older People, version 2](#)
- [Family involvement in managing medications of older patients across transitions of care: a systematic review.](#) BMC Geriatr. 2019; 19, 95. doi.org/10.1186/s12877-019-1102-6
- Medication reconciliation at transitions of care. [AHRQ MATCH Toolkit](#)
- [Preventing Medication-related Falls in Older Adults](#)

4

Convenience: Helping older persons take each medication as intended to achieve their goals of therapy and afford their medications

Supporting effective medication self-management in older adults. Effective medication self-management may require a modified lifestyle and employ theories to support the concept that self-care practices are deliberate, learned, and developed over time. Self-care practices are directed at maintaining functional integrity, overcoming challenging situations in life, and engaging in self-care practices related to medical care and illness. Studies of older adults who have mastered medication self-management reveal three key lifestyle themes that contribute to successful medication management:

- Living orderly (e.g. organizing and maintaining daily routines)
- Aging well (e.g. being active and perceiving one’s self as healthy)
- Employing habits to successfully self-manage medications (e.g. adjusting/simplifying routines, tracking doses, collaborating with their care team, valuing the benefits of medications, and managing costs)

Tips for Reducing Medication Costs

- Patient assistance programs (for example, [NeedyMeds](#), [Prescription Assistance Programs](#))
- Patient support groups (American Diabetes Association, American Cancer Society)
- [State Prescription Drug Repository Programs](#)
- [On-line coupons](#)
- [Discount cards](#) (AARP and others)
- [Less costly medications in a therapeutic class](#)

Medication Self-Efficacy Checklist

Use a [7-question self-efficacy checklist for medication management](#) to gauge a person’s confidence in managing medications within the 4-step process of intended use, effectiveness, safety and convenience of use. The checklist helps providers focus their discussions on their patients’ and families’ understanding and confidence within part of the 4-step process.

Teaching Tips: Ask students to...

- **Step 1: Intended Use.** Ask the older person and their family to explain why they are taking each of their medications in their own words. If they are unsure, start by identifying the organ system or the part of the body for each medication.
- **Step 2: Effectiveness.** Ask the older person and their family to tell you how they think each medication is working for them. Develop patient-specific goals of therapy using SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound).
- **Step 3: Safety.** Review a patient’s medication list, identify if any of their medications are on the Beers list, and discuss the risks and benefits of staying on that medication. Identify if the medication can be stopped or replaced with a safer alternative. Review concerns with the patient and identify causes.
- **Step 4: Convenience of Use.** Help older persons organize activities of daily life by establishing habits, adjusting routines, tracking doses, and simplifying tasks. Ask a patient or their caregiver, “Is the cost of any of your medications a burden for you?” Consider if the medication can be deprescribed or replaced with a lower cost alternative. Share discount programs, cost-saving websites and apps with the patient.
- **Summary Intervention:** Ask a patient and their family caregivers the medication self-efficacy questions to determine how confident they are managing their medications, and to focus a discussion on how to help improve the patient’s confidence within the specific steps of the 4-step medication use process.