AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 515
(A-22)

Introduced by: Senior Physicians Section

Subject: Reducing Polypharmacy as a Significant Contributor to Senior Morbidity

Referred to: Reference Committee E

Whereas, Excessive, unnecessary, or incompatible medication use increases the risk of adverse drug effects, including falls, cognitive impairment, adverse drug interactions and drug-disease interactions;[1, 4, 5] and

Whereas, Older patients often have multiple complex conditions making drug therapy an essential part of medical management; yet multiple medications in complex patients may shift the benefit of drug therapy from positive to negative;[2, 6] and

Whereas, Although some EHRs are automatically screening patient med lists for incompatibilities, they may not include supplements and OTC meds; and fidelity with actual current regimens is compromised when self reporting is relied upon, especially in the setting of cognitive decline; and

Whereas, Consumer patient education on polypharmacy has been raised by such groups as AARP, Consumer Reports, and governmental units such as CDC with questionable penetrance to the affected population; and

Whereas, Physicians are the natural source for patient education and engagement;[3] and

Whereas, It is advisable for the AMA to use its resources to educate patients about the dangers of polypharmacy, and to assist physicians to take steps to recognize and reduce it;[7-10] therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association work with other organizations e.g., AARP, other medical specialty societies, PhRMA, and pharmacists to educate patients about the significant effects of all medications and most supplements, and to encourage physicians to teach patients to bring all medications and supplements or accurate, updated lists including current dosage to each encounter (Directive to Take Action); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA along with other appropriate organizations encourage physicians and ancillary staff if available to initiate discussions with patients on improving their medical care through the use of only the minimal number of medications (including prescribed or over-the-counter, including vitamins and supplements) needed to optimize their health (Directive to Take Action); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA work with other stakeholders and EHR vendors to address the continuing problem of inaccuracies in medication reconciliation and propagation of such inaccuracies in electronic health records, and to include non-prescription medicines in medication compatibility screens. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

Received: 05/03/22

REFERENCES:
1. NIH, National Institute on Aging. The dangers of polypharmacy and the case for deprescribing in older adults. Aug. 24, 2021 https://www.nia.nih.gov/news/dangers-polypharmacy-and-case-deprescribing-older-adults (accessed April 3, 2022)
2. Eyigor, S., Kutsal, Y. G., Toraman, F., Durmus, B., Gokkaya, K. O., Aydeniz, A., ... & Borman, P. (2021). Polypharmacy, physical and nutritional status, and depression in the elderly: do polypharmacy deserve some credits in these problems?. *Experimental aging research*, *47*(1), 79-91.
3. Science and storytelling: Making physicians' voices the loudest in the room, source: https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/public-health/science-and-storytelling-making-physicians-voices-loudest-room (accessed April 3, 2022)
4. Halli-Tierney, A., Scarbrough, C., & Carroll, D. G. (2019). Polypharmacy: evaluating risks and deprescribing. *American family physician*, *100*(1), 32-38.
5. Onder, G., & Marengoni, A. (2017). Polypharmacy. *JAMA*, *318*(17), 1728-1728.
6. Carroll, C., & Hassanin, A. (2017). Polypharmacy in the elderly—when good drugs lead to bad outcomes: a teachable moment. *JAMA Internal Medicine*, *177*(6), 871-871.
7. American Geriatrics Society Beers Criteria Update Expert, P. (2015). "American Geriatrics Society 2015 Updated Beers Criteria for Potentially Inappropriate Medication Use in Older Adults." J Am Geriatr Soc 63(11): 2227-2246.
8. Cooper, J. A., et al. (2015). "Interventions to improve the appropriate use of polypharmacy in older people: a Cochrane systematic review." BMJ Open 5(12): e009235.
9. Patterson, S. M., et al. (2014). "Interventions to improve the appropriate use of polypharmacy for older people." Cochrane Database Syst Rev(10): CD008165
10. Steinman, M. A., Miao, Y., Boscardin, W. J., Komaiko, K. D., & Schwartz, J. B. (2014). Prescribing quality in older veterans: a multifocal approach. Journal of general internal medicine, 29(10), 1379-1386.

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

Improving the Quality of Geriatric Pharmacotherapy H-100.968
Our AMA believes that the Food and Drug Administration should encourage manufacturers to develop low dose formulations of medications commonly used by older patients in order to meet the special needs of this group; require geriatric-relevant labeling for over-the-counter medications; provide incentives to pharmaceutical manufacturers to better study medication effects in the frail elderly and oldest-old in pre- and post-marketing clinical trials; and establish mechanisms for data collection, monitoring, and analysis of medication-related problems by age group.
Citation: CSA Rep. 5, A-02; Reaffirmation A-10; Reaffirmed: CSAPH Rep. 01, A-20

Supporting Safe Medical Products as a Priority Public Health Initiative H-120.958
Our AMA will: (1) work through the United States Adopted Names (USAN) Council to adopt methodology to help prevent "look alike-sound alike" errors in giving new drugs generic names; (2) continue participation on the National Coordinating Council for Medication Error Reporting and Prevention; (3) support the FDA's Medwatch program by working to improve physicians' knowledge and awareness of the program and encouraging proper reporting of adverse events; (4) vigorously work to support and encourage efforts to create and expeditiously implement a national coding system for prescription medicine packaging in an effort to improve patient safety; and (5) seek opportunities to work collaboratively with other stakeholders to provide information to individual physicians and state medical societies on the need for public health infrastructure and local consortiums to work on problems related to medical product safety.
Citation: Res. 416, A-99; Appended: Res. 504, I-01; Reaffirmation A-10; Modified: CSAPH Rep. 01, A-20

Geriatric Medicine H-295.981
1. Our AMA reaffirms its support for: (a) the incorporation of geriatric medicine into the curricula of medical school departments and its encouragement for further education and research on the problems of aging and health care of the aged at the medical school, graduate and continuing medical education levels; and (b) increased training in geriatric pharmacotherapy at the medical student and residency level for all relevant specialties and encourages the Accreditation Council

for Graduate Medical Education and the appropriate Residency Review Committees to find ways to incorporate geriatric pharmacotherapy into their current programs.

2. Our AMA recognizes the critical need to ensure that all physicians who care for older adults, across all specialties, are competent in geriatric care, and encourages all appropriate specialty societies to identify and implement the most expedient and effective means to ensure adequate education in geriatrics at the medical school, graduate, and continuing medical education levels for all relevant specialties.
Citation: Res. 137, A-85; Reaffirmed by CLRPD Rep. 2, I-95; Appended: CSA Rep. 5, A-02; Appended: Res. 301, A-10; Reaffirmed: BOT Rep. 05, I-16

National Health Information Technology D-478.995
1. Our AMA will closely coordinate with the newly formed Office of the National Health Information Technology Coordinator all efforts necessary to expedite the implementation of an interoperable health information technology infrastructure, while minimizing the financial burden to the physician and maintaining the art of medicine without compromising patient care.
2. Our AMA: (A) advocates for standardization of key elements of electronic health record (EHR) and computerized physician order entry (CPOE) user interface design during the ongoing development of this technology; (B) advocates that medical facilities and health systems work toward standardized login procedures and parameters to reduce user login fatigue; and (C) advocates for continued research and physician education on EHR and CPOE user interface design specifically concerning key design principles and features that can improve the quality, safety, and efficiency of health care; and (D) advocates for continued research on EHR, CPOE and clinical decision support systems and vendor accountability for the efficacy, effectiveness, and safety of these systems.
3. Our AMA will request that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services: (A) support an external, independent evaluation of the effect of Electronic Medical Record (EMR) implementation on patient safety and on the productivity and financial solvency of hospitals and physicians' practices; and (B) develop, with physician input, minimum standards to be applied to outcome-based initiatives measured during this rapid implementation phase of EMRs.
4. Our AMA will (A) seek legislation or regulation to require all EHR vendors to utilize standard and interoperable software technology components to enable cost efficient use of electronic health records across all health care delivery systems including institutional and community based settings of care delivery; and (B) work with CMS to incentivize hospitals and health systems to achieve interconnectivity and interoperability of electronic health records systems with independent physician practices to enable the efficient and cost effective use and sharing of electronic health records across all settings of care delivery.
5. Our AMA will seek to incorporate incremental steps to achieve electronic health record (EHR) data portability as part of the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology's (ONC) certification process.
6. Our AMA will collaborate with EHR vendors and other stakeholders to enhance transparency and establish processes to achieve data portability.
7. Our AMA will directly engage the EHR vendor community to promote improvements in EHR usability.
8. Our AMA will advocate for appropriate, effective, and less burdensome documentation requirements in the use of electronic health records.
9. Our AMA will urge EHR vendors to adopt social determinants of health templates, created with input from our AMA, medical specialty societies, and other stakeholders with expertise in social determinants of health metrics and development, without adding further cost or documentation burden for physicians.
Citation: Res. 730, I-04; Reaffirmed in lieu of Res. 818, I-07; Reaffirmed in lieu of Res. 726, A-08; Reaffirmation A-10; Reaffirmed: BOT Rep. 16, A-11; Modified: BOT Rep. 16, A-11; Modified:

BOT Rep. 17, A-12; Reaffirmed in lieu of Res. 714, A-12; Reaffirmed in lieu of Res. 715, A-12; Reaffirmed: BOT Rep. 24, A-13; Reaffirmed in lieu of Res. 724, A-13; Appended: Res. 720, A-13; Appended: Sub. Res. 721, A-13; Reaffirmed: CMS Rep. 4, I-13; Reaffirmation I-13; Appended: BOT Rep. 18, A-14; Appended: BOT Rep. 20, A-14; Reaffirmation A-14; Reaffirmed: BOT Rep. 17, A-15; Reaffirmed in lieu of Res. 208, A-15; Reaffirmed in lieu of Res. 223, A-15; Reaffirmation I-15; Reaffirmed: CMS Rep. 07, I-16; Reaffirmed: BOT Rep. 05, I-16; Appended: Res. 227, A-17; Reaffirmed in lieu of: Res. 243, A-17; Modified: BOT Rep. 39, A-18; Reaffirmed: BOT Rep. 45, A-18; Reaffirmed: BOT Rep. 19, A-18; Reaffirmation: A-19; Reaffirmed: CMS Rep. 3, I-19