

Can Value Champions Reduce Inappropriate Prescribing for People with Dementia?



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“Training front-line clinicians to be effective value champions—someone who can serve as an embedded change agent—has great potential to address the over-prescribing of potentially inappropriate medications among people living with dementia.”

RATIONALE: Overuse of potentially inappropriate medications among people living with dementia remains a persistent problem. Clinical value champions are front-line clinicians who can advocate for and influence practice-driven change at multiple levels within a health care organization.

OBJECTIVE: To train value champions across two large accountable care organizations to address over-prescribing of potentially inappropriate medications for people living with dementia. This pragmatic randomized clinical trial will examine the impact of this embedded intervention on prescribing outcomes and health care utilization, and assess its appropriateness, feasibility, fidelity, penetration, and equity.

SETTING: Two large accountable care organizations (ACOs) across 14 states.

POPULATION: Medicare patients with a diagnosis of dementia who are seen in primary care clinic settings.

INTERVENTION: Clinicians from randomly selected primary care settings in each ACO will participate in a six-month value champions training program and then engage fellow clinicians, staff and patients in efforts to de-implement potentially inappropriate medications for people living with dementia.

OUTCOMES: The primary outcome is a patient-level measure of exposure to one of three classes of potentially inappropriate medications ascertained from Medicare pharmacy claims data. Secondary outcomes include emergency department visits or a hospitalization for a fall, and five intermediate implementation outcomes: appropriateness, feasibility, fidelity, penetration, and equity.

IMPACT: This study will allow health care systems to gain real-world experience integrating this pragmatic intervention in a manner that provides clear information on its effectiveness and will enable them to train others to be value champions to address other overused services across additional clinical sites.