

Medication Adherence

Pharmacy Quality Alliance Endorsed Performance Measures

MEASURE DEFINITION

Patients ages 18 and older with a prescription for diabetes, hypertension or cholesterol medications who fill their prescription often enough to cover 80% or more of the time they are supposed to be taking the medication.

The three measures are:

- Medication Adherence for Diabetes Medications
- Medication Adherence for Hypertension (RAS Antagonists)
- Medication Adherence for Cholesterol (Statins)

Medications included in each measure		
Diabetes	Hypertension	Cholesterol
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biguanides • Sulfonylureas • Thiazolidinediones • Dipeptidyl peptidase (DPP)-IV inhibitors • Incretin mimetics • Meglitinides • Sodium glucose cotransporter 2 (SGLT2) inhibitors 	Renin-angiotensin system (RAS) antagonists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors • Angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs) • Direct renin inhibitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statins

EXCLUSIONS

Patients are excluded if they:

- Received hospice care during the measurement year
- Have an end-stage renal disease (ESRD) diagnosis
- Diabetes measure only: have a prescription for insulin
- Hypertension measure only: have a prescription for sacubitril/valsartan

TIPS FOR TALKING WITH PATIENTS

- Provide short and clear instructions for all prescriptions
- Emphasize the benefits of taking the medication and the risks of not taking the medication. The benefits should outweigh the risks.
- At each visit, ask your patients about their medication habits, including the average number of doses they may miss each week. Continue with open-ended questions to identify barriers to taking medications:
 - What side effects have you had from the medication, if any?
 - How many doses have you forgotten to take?
 - Are there any financial barriers preventing you from obtaining your prescriptions?
 - What issues prevent you from refilling your prescription?
- Offer recommendations for improvement:
 - Recommend weekly or monthly pillboxes, smart phone apps with medication reminder alerts, and placing medications in a visible area (but in properly closed containers and safely out of the reach of children or pets) for patients who forget to take their medications.
 - Encourage patients to call your office if they experience side effects to discuss alternative medications.

- Refer patients to their health plan to learn about mail-order options for their prescriptions.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Write a 90-day prescription for maintenance medications and suggest the use of a mail-order pharmacy.
- Write prescriptions with refills for patients who are stable on their medications to avoid the risk of lapse between fills.
- When prescribing a new medication schedule a follow-up visit within 30 days to assess how the medication is working. Schedule this visit while the patient is still in the office.