

January 27, 2010

## Family Health Network that Includes Pharmacist Improves Quality of Care for Chronically Ill, Study Finds

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A pharmacist, collaborating with nurse practitioners and family physicians in a Canadian family health network, contributed to a 9.2% improvement in the quality of care for chronic disease management, according to a study published in the December 2009 *Canadian Family Physician*.<sup>1</sup>

Anticipatory and Preventative Team Care (APTCare), a multidisciplinary team-based care trial, examined the quality of care for chronic disease management for diabetes, coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The APTCare study included 241 patients ages 50 and older who were at risk for negative medical outcomes. There were 120 patients in the intervention group and 121 patients receiving usual care. Patients were recruited for the study between October 2004 and March 2005 and were followed for 12 to 18 months.

At the beginning of the study, a pharmacist and three nurse practitioners reviewed the charts of patients in the intervention group and visited those patients at home. The pharmacist reviewed patients' medications, identified possible medication-related problems and worked with the nurse practitioners and family physicians to address medication-related problems. Nurse practitioners collaborated with the pharmacist and family physicians to create a care plan for each patient.

The study's authors concluded that the multidisciplinary care management approach "improved the quality of chronic care delivered to older, complex patients."

An abstract of the study is available at <http://www.cfp.ca/cgi/content/abstract/55/12/e76>

1. Hogg W, Lemelin J, Dahrouge S et al. Randomized controlled trial of Anticipatory and Preventative multidisciplinary Team Care. For complex patients in a community-based primary care setting. *Can Fam Physician*. 2009; 55:e76-85.

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ASHP Health Policy Alerts are synopses of new studies highlighting the medication-use process in health care, especially studies assessing contemporary pharmacists' role in improving medication-use outcomes. The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists encourages recipients to keep a copy of this synopsis for future reference.



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