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## Clinical pharmacist improves patients' medical conditions, reduces medications, study finds

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A clinical pharmacist identified 250 medication-related problems in 83 patients (90% of the patients studied) that improved patients' medical conditions and reduced the average number of medications per patient, according to a study in the September/October 2009 *Journal of the American Pharmacists Association*.<sup>1</sup>

The pharmacist intervention improved the overall medical conditions for 45% of patients, while 46% of patients remained the same, and 9% saw their medical conditions worsen. The intervention also reduced the average number of medications per patient from 3.92 to 3.04.

The top three types of medication-related problems the pharmacist identified during the intervention were the need for additional medication therapy, 124 (50%), nonadherence to medication therapy, 44 (18%), and a medication's dose was too low, 33 (13%).

As a result of the clinical pharmacist's medication reviews, physicians changed patients' medication regimens, extensive patient education was provided, lab monitoring was initiated, and office and emergency department visits and lab services were avoided.

An abstract of the study is available at <http://japha.metapress.com/app/home/contribution.asp?referrer=parent&backto=issue,7,21;journal,2,43;homemainpublications,2,2;>

1. Harris IM, Westberg SM, Frakes MJ et al. Outcomes of medication therapy review in a family medicine clinic. *J Am Pharm Assoc*. 2009; 49:623-7.

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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.

