

Abstract

Objective: Polypharmacy is a significant problem in the nursing home population. The purpose of this project was to study the effectiveness of utilizing the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) within the nursing home to make recommendations regarding medication reduction to the prescribing provider.

Methods: A pre and post chart audit was undertaken of all patients within the facility where the project took place. All medications were accounted for and categorized. Weekly meetings of the IDT over four weeks took place where a medication audit tool was used, and each patient's medications were reviewed. Recommendations from the team were then forwarded to the prescriber for review and implementation.

Results: Thirty-eight patients were reviewed during the project period, with a combined medication count of 670 medications at the start of the project. After the four-week project period all patients had been reviewed by the IDT and a total of 21 recommendations were forwarded to the prescriber. Of those, 18 were approved and implemented. This resulted in a mean reduction in medications per patient of 1.32. Significant reductions were seen in the specifically targeted medication categories of Antipsychotics (17.5%), Benzodiazepines (15%), Opiates (33.3%) Anticoagulants (28.6%), and Insomnia/Hypnotics (75%). A paired samples t-test showed a statistically significant result.

Conclusions: Utilization of the IDT to make recommendations to the prescribing provider provides a complementary tool to address polypharmacy. Interprofessional collaboration is key to improving patient outcomes.