

Medication Safety

Improving drug safety practices, reducing medication errors, adverse drug events and developing innovative care standards

National estimates suggest that adverse drug events (ADEs) contribute an additional \$3.5 billion to U.S. health care costs.¹ Given the U.S. population's large and ever-increasing magnitude of medication exposure, the potential for harm from ADEs is a critical patient safety and public health challenge.

ADEs are a direct result of drugs used during medical care that produce harmful events. These harmful events can include, but are not limited to, medication errors, adverse drug reactions, allergic reactions and overdoses.^{2,3}

A Community-Based Approach

Delmarva Foundation has partnered with IPRO in New York and the Carolina Centers for Medical Excellence in South Carolina to form the Atlantic Quality Innovation Network (AQIN) Quality Innovation Network - Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO), under contract with CMS. As part of the AQIN, Delmarva Foundation is working with providers (hospitals, nursing homes, home health, pain management centers, diabetes centers, anticoagulation clinics, home health agencies, physician office practices, others), pharmacists, pharmacies and stakeholders in the District of Columbia to reduce and monitor adverse drug event rates. To reduce and prevent the incidence of ADEs, we are convening community groups throughout the region that treat Medicare Fee-for-Service (FFS) beneficiaries taking three or more medications, including at least one of these high-risk medications: anticoagulants, diabetic agents and/or opioids.

Our Goals

- Reduce ADEs by 35 percent per 1,000 screened Medicare FFS beneficiaries by the year 2019
- Monitor ADE rates by Medicare FFS beneficiaries with focus on anticoagulants, diabetic agents or opioids by care setting, state, region and readmission rate

Key Strategies & Interventions

Our strategies and interventions will foster community and coalition building with all providers and stakeholders in each recruited community in the region and will include:

- Building on the previous QIO ADE project work, CMS' Partnership for Patients initiative and the Hospital Engagement Networks' current efforts on this ADE topic area
- Building on the momentum of established QIO ADE partnerships

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¹Institute of Medicine Committee on Identifying and Preventing Medication Errors. *Preventing Medication Errors: Quality Chasm Series*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2006.

²Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Adverse Drug Event (ADE), in Patient Safety Network: Glossary. Available at: <http://psnet.ahrq.gov/glossary.aspx>.

³National Action Plan for Adverse Drug Event Prevention. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2014 <http://www.health.gov/hai/pdfs/ADE-Action-Plan-508c.pdf>.

1.5 Million
Adverse Drug Events Occur
Each Year
in the U.S. Health Care System

3 adverse drug events will happen in about the time it takes you to read this graphic.

Each hospital patient suffers **one medication error per day** on average.

Key facts:

Adverse drug events contribute an extra \$3.5 billion in U.S. health care costs—up to \$5.6 million per U.S. hospital.

\$3.5 billion



Older adults are up to seven times more likely than younger persons to experience an adverse drug event requiring hospitalization.

7x



Adverse drug events result in approximately 1 million emergency room visits per year.



1 million

The top two medications implicated in adverse drug events are insulin (for diabetes) and warfarin (a blood thinner).

- Increasing patient-centered care by coordinating provider communication regarding evidence-based medication therapy management and medication reconciliation across care setting
- Developing and utilizing ADE prevention toolkits in all care settings
- Developing and utilizing data reports that track ADE rates by beneficiary on anticoagulants, diabetic agents and opioids for participating community partners and providers

Join the Medication Safety Network

Visit the AQIN website to learn more about initiative and how you and members of your community can get involved this initiative <http://www.atlanticquality.org>.

Contact Us

Jennifer Thomas, PharmD

Task Lead

Delmarva Foundation/AQIN-DC

thomasjen@delmarvafoundation.org

410-872-9698



www.ATLANTICQUALITY.org • 1-800-937-3362

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