



At the forefront of care for geriatrics with diabetes: An improvement project to better patient care and change practice behavior of Optometrists and Podiatrists

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Podiatrists and optometrists are the primary health care providers of foot and eye care in America and are often the first to identify pedal and ocular complications in older Americans with diabetes. An initiative to improve upon the practice behavior of these limited licensed physicians to reduce the complications of lower extremity amputation and blindness is the impetus behind our improvement project.

Our goal is to increase the screening of diabetics for peripheral arterial disease, distal peripheral neuropathy and retinopathy. We will strive to see that this population group has semiannual ABI and monofilament testing by podiatrists along with an annual dilated eye exam by optometrists.

In the present healthcare system we have a variety of self managed and physician managed/coordinated plans and while third party payers have directed their energies to quality performance measures through primary care physicians with incentive programs affecting all providers, many of the early signs and symptoms related to the complications of diabetes are brought first to DPMs and ODs as older patients have traditionally entered those practices on their own.

In the present environment where the large majority of Medicare patients are not in PCP controlled insurance products, the need to establish and implement quality measures for specialists such as DPM and OD providers is lacking. By bringing this initiative forward a new specialist driven approach to the complications of chronic disease management and a benefit compensation system directed toward the specialist provider will serve as a future model for others.

Program Selection: Podiatric Health

Topic: Podiatric Concerns in the Geriatric Population

Keywords: Quality Improvement, Diabetes

Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of this poster presentation the viewer will be able to:

- 1) recognize the significance of monofilament and ABI screening as well as annual dilated eye exams in the adult diabetic patient
- 2) begin to formulate specialist driven quality measures in the recognition and management of complications associated with a chronic disease
- 3) apply this improvement project to their own daily work in screening patients for retinopathy, peripheral arterial disease and distal peripheral neuropathy

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Target Audiences: Leaders in quality improvement in healthcare, podiatric physicians, optometrists, ophthalmologists and family physicians

Comments to Organizer: This poster presentation is being submitted to the Podiatric Health Section but is important to the Vision Health Section as well

Presentation Format: Poster

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Presenting

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I wish to disclose that I have **NO** financial interests or other relationship with the manufactures of commercial products, suppliers of commercial services or commercial supporters.

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