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Improving Patient Outcomes: Back to the Basics

Please note, this communication applies to Healthy Blue + MedicareSM (HMO-POS D-SNP) offered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (Blue Cross NC).

Enhanced adherence mitigates healthcare costs and improves patient outcomes and quality of life. Promoting medication adherence and advocating for statin use among diabetes patients is critical.

Statin Use in Diabetes:

- Diabetics are two to four times more likely to die from heart disease (American Heart Association).
- Statins lower LDL cholesterol, reducing cardiovascular events by 25 to 60%.
- Statin use is low, particularly in younger, female, and black individuals.
- Delayed statin use increases cardiovascular disease risk in diabetic patients.
- National guidelines recommend statin therapy for diabetics ages 40 to 75, regardless of LDL levels.
- CMS has adopted the Statin Use in Persons with Diabetes (SUPD) measure to combat cardiovascular death in diabetic patients.

Medication Adherence:

- Poor adherence increases morbidity and mortality, causing more than 125,000 deaths and 10% of hospitalizations annually in the United States.
- Forty-five percent of U.S. adults have hypertension and only 24% manage it effectively, largely due to non-adherence.
- High adherence in diabetic patients reduces hospitalization risks by 30%.
- Improved adherence can save \$1,200 to \$8,000 per patient annually.

Supporting Patients:

- Simplify the regimen: Prescribe medications with fewer daily doses.
- Regular follow-ups: Ensure correct medication use and adjust doses as needed.
- Clear communication: Explain medication benefits, risks of non-compliance, and side effects.
- Extended prescriptions: Provide 90 to 100 days' supply and sufficient refills.
- Home delivery: Eliminate transportation barriers.
- Address statin hesitancy: Discuss pros and cons and involve family in decisions.

<https://www.bluecrossnc.com/providers/networks-programs/blue-medicare/healthy-blue-medicare>

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Senior Health, DBA Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, is an HMO-POS D-SNP plan with a Medicare contract and a NC State Medicaid Agency Contract (SMAC). Enrollment in Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Senior Health depends upon contract renewal.

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- Use technology: Set up reminders through mobile apps, SMS, email, or pill containers.
- Address cost issues: Prescribe affordable options and explore assistance programs.
- Personalized care: Tailor medication plans to the patient's lifestyle and needs.

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