An innovative partnership to address deprescribing in the older adults: a multi-stakeholder, cross system approach: A Team Alice study

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Background
- Inappropriate polypharmacy in older adults calls for urgent cross-system action to prevent avoidable harm.
- Deprescribing (DeRx) is an important approach to reduce risk but evidence for effective strategies to drive and sustain deprescribing is underdeveloped.
- Stakeholder engagement is recognized as an important approach in developing interventions in the real world but efforts at such engagement in deprescribing research have been limited to date.

Objective
To create a sustainable learning partnership with key stakeholders to support deprescribing for older adults across the healthcare system with:
- a strategic plan
- innovative, participatory research

Implementation
Setting: Western New York (WNY).

The Deprescribing Partnership of WNY: convened by an interdisciplinary research team – Team Alice*

Recruitment of community stakeholders across the health system:
- Primary care providers
- Health plan representatives
- Pharmacists,
- Patient advocates
- Regional health information org. (RHIO)

The above were contacted by Team Alice via mail or email or word of mouth (n=250).

Partnership Meetings: 4 partnership meetings over 8 months, averaging 26 attendees each.

Preliminary Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME MEASURES</th>
<th>OUTCOMES TO DATE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnership meetings</td>
<td>4 partnership meetings over 8 months; mean 26 attendees each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of a strategic plan</td>
<td>Systems theory approach to create a shared vision &amp; strategic plan from the discussions. Validated by stakeholders at 4th meeting.</td>
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<td>Development of stakeholder-identified research studies</td>
<td>Stakeholders participated in designing three research studies - one under each goal of the Strategic Plan</td>
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Deprescribing Partnership: Strategic Plan

Vision: To reduce avoidable medication harm for older adults

Partnership Strategies

Patient-Driven DeRx
Arm patients and caregivers to protect themselves
- Identify risky prescribing
- Advocate for themselves across the system

NEW PROJECT: Develop and test educational videos for the above
- FUNDED 07/2019 – 06/2021 (Retirement Research Foundation)

Provider-Driven DeRx
Initial focus: Primary care Challenges:
- Target the right patients
- Integrate intervention into primary care

NEW PROJECT: Investigate current models / best practices to inform future intervention designs
- Human Factors Engineering approach
- Grant submission planned

New research projects were designed and initiated under each of these three goals. The strategic plan was developed independently, but it is consistent with a recent publication on a framework for deprescribing.1

Discussion
At the first 3 meetings, the partners identified barriers, facilitators, and strategies for deprescribing and postulated potential research ideas. A systems theory approach was used to create a shared vision and strategic plan. This was validated by stakeholders at the 4th meeting. The agreed-upon Strategic Plan has three goals:

(1) Patient-driven deprescribing – engaging patients and caregivers to identify risks and advocate for themselves;

(2) Provider-driven deprescribing – with an initial focus on primary care, future steps include engaging other providers across the system;

(3) Cross-system functionality to electronically share deprescribing and Do Not Prescribe decisions across settings, to strengthen both (1) and (2).

Conclusion
Next steps will engage stakeholders in designing and testing interventions using both quantitative and human factors analysis.

Reference

Team Alice: An interdisciplinary research team inspired by the story of Alice Brennan.

Alice’s story: Team Alice website: