

Technology & Information

Using EHR Improves Health of Elderly

Electronic health records (EHRs) can help improve the care of patients with chronic illnesses and reduce the use of medications that are linked to increased risk of falls in elderly patients, according to new Geisinger Health System research. Geisinger pharmacists and geriatricians recently reviewed the medication records of several hundred elderly patients using the health system's \$90-million EHR. Recommendations for individualized, tailored medication regimens were emailed to patients' physicians. The result was decreased use of psychoactive medications among elderly patients, compliance, and decreased rates of tobacco use. For more information, see the *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, April issue, at www.springerlink.com/content/d167h3634x61510r/?p=4846f78a2d67419485e7babad9eb4532&pi=5

Some Drugs Increase Risk of Falling

Researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill have created a list of prescription drugs that increase the risk of falling among people aged 65 and older who take 4 or more seizure medications, painkillers, and more. The study researchers urge physicians to look for medications that cause a less-sedating effect in older patients and pharmacists to be alert for patients 65 and older who take 4 or more drugs. View the article at <http://ajgeripharma.com/current.html>.

CMS Plans an E-prescribing Conference

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is planning a conference to educate physicians and other stakeholders. The conference will be held under a federal program of 2008 to encourage the use of electronic prescribing. The conference will be held in Boston, October 6-7, 2008.

For more information, see www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/media/press_releases.asp for the August 8 press release. MPM

Table 1. Prescription Medications That Increase the Risk of Falls for Patients 65 and Older

Alprazolam (Xanax)*	Clonazepam (Klonopin)	Paraldehyde (Paral)	Gabapentin (Neurontin)	Morphine (MS Contin)
Amitriptyline (Elavil)	Clozapine (Clozaril)	Paroxetine (Paxil)	Halazepam (Paxipam)	Nefazodone (Serzone)
Amobarbital (Amytal)	Codeine (Tylenol with Codeine)	Pentobarbital (Nembutal)	Haloperidol (Haldol)	Quetiapine (Seroquel)
Amoxapine (Asendin)	Desipramine (Norpramin)	Perphenazine (Trilafon)	Hydrocodone (Vicodin)	Risperidone (Risperdal)
Aripiprazole (Ablify)	Diazepam (Valium)	Phenelzine (Nardil)	Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)	Secobarbital (Seconal)
Baclofen (Lioresal)	Digoxin (Lanoxin)	Phenobarbital	Imipramine (Tofranil)	Sertraline (Zoloft)
Bupropion (Wellbutrin, Wellbutrin SR)	Disopyramide (Norpace)	Phenytoin (Dilantin)	Isocarboxazid (Marplan)	Temazepam (Restoril)
Buspiron (Buspar)	Divalproex sodium (Depakote, Depakote ER)	Pimozide (Orap)	Levetiracetam (Keppra)	Thioridazine (Mellaril)
Butabarbital	Doxepin (Sinequan, Zonalon, Prudoxin)	Pregabalin (Lyrica)	Livorphanol (Levo-Dromoran)	Thiothixene (Navane)
Carbamazepine (Tegretol, Tegretol XR, Carbatrol)	Duloxetine (Cymbalta)	Primidone (Mysoline)	Lorazepam (Ativan)	Tiagabine (Gabatril)
Chloral hydrate	Escitalopram (Lexapro)	Propoxyphene (Darvon, Darvocet)	Loxapine (Loxitane, Loxitane C)	Topiramate (Topamax)
Chlorazepate (Tranxene)	Estazolam (Prosom)	Protriptyline (Vivactil)	Maprotiline (Ludiomil)	Tranlycypromine (Parnate)
Chlordiazepoxide (Librium, Libitrol, Librax)	Olanzapine (Zyprexa, Zyprexa Zydis)	Quazepam (Doral)	Meprobital	Trazodone (Desyrel)
Chlorpromazine (Thorazine)	Oxazepam (Serax)	Ethosuximide (Zarontin)	Meprobamate (Miltown, Equanil)	Triazolam (Halcion)
Citalopram (Celexa)	Oxycodone (Percocet)	Felbamate (Felbatol)	Mesoridazine (Serentil)	Trifluoperazine (Stelazine)
Clidinium-chlordiazepoxide (Librax)	Oxycodone (Percocet)	Fentanyl (Duragesic)	Methadone (Dolophine)	Trimipramine (Surmontil)
Clomipramine (Anafranil)	Oxymorphone (Numorphan)	Fluoxetine (Prozac)	Methsuximide (Celontin)	Venlafaxine (Effexor, Effexor XR)
		Fluphenazine (Permitil, Prolixin)	Mirtazapine (Remeron)	Ziprasidone (Geodon)
		Flurazepam (Dalmane)	Molindone (Moban)	Zolpidem (Ambien)
		Fluvoxamine (Luvox)		Zonisamide (Zonegran)

* Generic Name (Brand Name)