

Diagnosis and Treatment of Depression

MVP Health Care, as part of its continuing Quality Improvement Program, adopted a depression guideline for our practitioners. The guideline is based on the Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement's guideline: *Major Depression in Adults in Primary Care*. It reflects the current standard of care for the management of depression.

Impact of the Condition

Major Depression is one of the most common mental disorders in the U.S. Among the adult population, the 12-month prevalence of depression is 6.7 percent. Almost 17 percent of adults will experience depression at some point in their lives¹. Depression often co-occurs with other conditions and is associated with decreased adherence to medical regimes. One meta-analysis concluded the odds of noncompliance with treatment recommendations are three times more likely in depressed patients than non-depressed individuals². Despite effective treatments for depression, many individuals often delay seeking treatment or do not receive an adequate trial of medication or physician follow-up.

Summary of ICSI Guidelines

MVP adopted the ICSI guidelines to assist primary care practitioners to better identify depression in adults (ages 18 and over) and to provide ongoing management to achieve remission of symptoms and return to an optimal level of functioning. The complete ICSI guideline can be found at http://www.icsi.org/depression_5/depression_major_in_adults_in_primary_care_3.html. The guidelines contain a one-page algorithm which is followed by supporting annotations and evidence. A *Quality Improvement Support* section is included that contains related aims, measures and specifications as well as implementation recommendations. Several useful tools are provided as Appendices including the PHQ-9 tool and scoring, a sample Suicidality Screening Flow and Geriatric Depression Screening (GDS). The ICSI guideline was last updated in May 2011 - a summary of the changes to the prior version can be found at: http://www.icsi.org/depression_5/depression_major_in_adults_in_primary_care_summary_of_changes_2.html.

Other Support for Management of Depression

In conjunction with the guidelines, MVP has a Condition Health Management program for members with Major Depression. The aim of the Depression Care Program is to help individuals recognize the symptoms of depression, obtain appropriate treatment and adhere to prescribed therapies. Members receive a biannual newsletter with helpful articles related to depression and mental wellness as well as other educational materials and tools to manage health. Members with moderate to severe depression may also participate in telephonic health coaching. Health coaching reinforces the care plans developed by the member's providers and empowers the member to bring about personal change and engage the health care system in a more constructive manner. If you would like to refer one of your patients to this program, please call the Health Care Operations Department at 1-866-942-7966. More information on this and MVP's other health programs may also be found on MVP's website:

<https://www.mvphealthcare.com/provider/documents/CHMReferralGuide.pdf>.

¹ National Institute of Mental Health. *Major depressive disorder among adults*. Accessed July 11, 2011 at: http://www.nimh.nih.gov/statistics/1MDD_ADULT.shtml.

² DiMatteo, MR, Lepper HS, Croghan, TW. Depression is a risk factor for noncompliance with medical treatment: *Meta-analysis of the effects of anxiety and depression on patient adherence*. *Arch Intern Med*. 2000;160:2101-2107.

PROVIDER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT MANUAL

If specialized treatment is needed, MVP will assist PCPs in matching their patients to the appropriate Behavioral Health provider in their area. To locate an appropriate provider please call the MVP Behavioral Health Access Center at 1 (800) 568-0458 between the hours of 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM. Providers in Vermont should call PrimariLink at 1 (800) 320-5895 during these same hours. Referrals for outpatient substance abuse treatment are generated when calling. Board-certified psychiatrists are also available by telephone to answer questions primary care physicians may have.

This guideline is not intended to replace the role of the physician's clinical judgment in the management of medical services, it is an educational guideline provided to assist in the delivery of good medical care. All treatment decisions are ultimately based on the physician's clinical assessment and judgment. Where medication recommendations are made, please refer to each health plan's formulary for coverage considerations.

MVP updates its clinical guidelines at least every two years. The review process is also initiated when new scientific evidence or national standards are published. Practitioners are alerted via the web site, and by written notices from the plan via fax or newsletter. A print copy of the clinical guideline can be requested by calling the MVP Quality Improvement Department at 1 (800) 777-4793 extension 2602.

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