

Medication Polypharmacy
among the Elderly.

Name.

Institution.

Date.

Medication

Polypharmacy among the

Elderly.



Definition of

Polypharmacy.

Polypharmacy is one of the most sensitive and current issues in health care and many health care researchers and critics have sought to come up with a globally accepted definition of the practice.

Viktil et al., (2017), defines polypharmacy as the practice of administering more

medications to clinically indicated patients in order to avert them from the unnecessary use of drugs.

General overview of the elderly people and medication-polypharmacy.

According to Hohl (2016), the elderly people frequently take medications this group of people receives more than 50% of all prescription drugs.

Medication polypharmacy is very critical among the elderly people who in most cases strive to counter diseases such as

heart failure, hypertension and Diabetes Mellitus.

Evidently, such diseases require more than one medication.

The elderly people who are subjected to medication polypharmacy arguably take 6-8 medications on a daily basis.

Medication polypharmacy among the elderly is affected or motivated by factors such as; access to quality health care, affordability of

health services, and the availability of Over the Counter Drugs (Hohl, 2016).

✚ When subjected to medication polypharmacy, the elderly people can easily make mistakes or medication errors, and this is motivated by their age, irrationality, confusions, lack of guidance and their deteriorating cognitive capabilities.



Tips for countering and preventing medication errors among the elderly people undergoing medication polypharmacy.

- ❖ Review of patient's medication by the health workers in order to reduce polypharmacy as well as inappropriate prescription of drugs (Fulton & Riley, 2015).
- ❖ Health workers should rely on computerized systems and alert

systems to reduce medication errors for the elderly people within the inpatient setting.

- ❖ Strictly rely on the recommendations provided by pharmacists to avoid inappropriate prescribing and adverse errors in medication.
- ❖ The elderly persons should be guided by a younger adult, a medical expert of a family member with medical knowledge to avoid errors.
- ❖ Provide community based educational

sessions or forums
to the adults in
regard to
medication and
dosage (Steinman
et al., 2015).

- ❖ Educate the elderly
people about the
adverse effects of
making errors in
medication
polypharmacy.

Relevant information that
should be shared with
family and caregivers.

- ✓ Information about
the patient's
medical conditions
or comorbidities.
- ✓ Information about
all the relevant
prognosis aspects.

- ✓ Information about
the patient's
treatment plans
(Steinman et al.,
2015).
- ✓ Information about
the patient's
medication, dosage
as well as drug
recommendations.
- ✓ Information about
the patient's diet
and
recommendations
(Fulton & Riley,
2015).

- ✓ Information about
patient's reactions,
allergies and side
effects to drugs.



Community Tools and
local resources for
reducing polypharmacy
errors.

Community tools.

- ✚ START criteria
- ✚ STOPP Criteria.
- ✚ BEERS Criteria.

Local Resources.

- ❖ Community centers
for the elderly and
sick persons.
- ❖ Local doctors,
pharmacists, and
nurses.

- ❖ Local clinics,
health centers, and
pharmacies.

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