

Mental Comorbidity and Chronic Illness in the National Medicaid System

Principal Investigator: Benjamin G. Druss, MD, MPH
Institution/Partners: Emory University
Project Period: 08/11/08-04/30/11
Grant Number: R21 HS17649-01

Description

Rates of mental illness are more than twice as high among Medicaid recipients as among the general population, and nearly half of Medicaid recipients with a diagnosed disability have one or more co-occurring medical or mental health conditions. This study provided the first national estimate of the impact of mental illness comorbidity on quality of care for Medicaid recipients with diabetes across all 50 state Medicaid programs.

Specific Aims

1. Study the impact of different comorbid mental health conditions on quality of care for Medicaid recipients with diabetes.
2. Examine how the association between mental conditions and quality of care is moderated by patient, provider, regional, and Medicaid policy factors, and mediated by use of outpatient services.

Findings

- For Medicaid recipients who have diabetes, a coexisting mental health condition is an important risk factor for both underuse and overuse of medical care.
- A number of characteristics, such as living in a state with higher Medicaid reimbursement fees and higher spending on mental health conditions appeared to mitigate these problems in enrollees with comorbid conditions.

Implications

Mental health disorders are important risk factors for poor diabetes care among Medicaid recipients. As Medicaid expands under health care reform, it will be important to track the quality of care and develop clinical and policy-level strategies to improve the quality of care in this vulnerable, complex patient population.

Main Objective

Study the impact of mental illness comorbidity on quality of care for Medicaid recipients with diabetes.

Chronic Conditions Considered

Mental illness
Diabetes

Preventive Service Considered

This project did not address a specific clinical preventive service.

Study Design, Data Sources & Sample Size

Analytic epidemiologic study
657,628 fee-for-service Medicaid enrollees with diabetes during 2003-2004.

Strategies Addressed from the HHS Strategic Framework on Multiple Chronic Conditions

- 4.B. Understand the epidemiology of multiple chronic conditions
- 4.C. Increase clinical health research

Mental Comorbidity and Chronic Illness in the National Medicaid System (Continued)

Publications (as of September 2013)

Druss BG, Zhao L, Shim R, Rust G, and Marcus SC. Mental comorbidity and quality of diabetes care under Medicaid: A 50-state analysis. *Medical Care*. May 2012; 50(5):428-33.