

Prevalence of potentially suboptimal prescribing and associated cognitive risk in Aboriginal primary care

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Abstract

Aim Prevalence of potentially suboptimal prescribing and associated risk factors were investigated among older patients attending primary care via Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs). **Methods** Prescription medications were audited for 420 systematically selected patients aged [?]50 years at three ACCHSs in urban, rural, and remote settings. Polypharmacy, potentially inappropriate medications (PIMs), and anticholinergic burden (ACB) were estimated and associated risk factors explored with logistic regression. **Results** The prevalence of polypharmacy, use of PIMs, and ACB score [?], was 43%, 18%, and 12%, respectively. In multivariable logistic regression analyses, polypharmacy was less likely in rural (OR=0.43, 95% CI=0.24-0.77) compared to urban health service patients, and more likely in those with heart disease (OR=2.62, 95% CI=1.62-4.25), atrial fibrillation (OR=4.25, 95% CI=1.08-16.81), hypertension (OR=2.14, 95% CI=1.34-3.44), diabetes (OR=2.72, 95% CI=1.69-4.39), or depression (OR=1.91, 95% CI=1.19-3.06). PIMs were more frequent in females (OR=1.88, 95% CI=1.03-3.42), and less frequent in rural (OR=0.41, 95% CI=0.19-0.85) and remote (OR=0.58, 95% CI=0.29-1.18) patients. Factors associated with PIMs were kidney disease (OR=2.60, 95% CI=1.37-4.92), urinary incontinence (OR=3.00, 95% CI=1.02-8.83), depression (OR=2.67, 95% CI=1.50-4.77), heavy alcohol use (OR=2.83, 95% CI 1.39-5.75) and subjective cognitive concerns (OR=2.69, 95% CI=1.31-5.52). High anticholinergic burden was less common in rural (OR=0.10, 95% CI 0.03-0.34) and remote (OR=0.51, 95% CI 0.25-1.04) patients, and more common in those with kidney disease (OR=3.07, 95% CI 1.50-6.30), or depression (OR=3.32, 95% CI 1.70-6.47). **Conclusion** Associations between potentially suboptimal prescribing and depression or cognitive concerns highlights the importance of considered medication review and deprescribing for these patients.

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