

Depression Screening Training and Implementation for Pharmacists In Rural Areas

The most important barriers to pharmacists implementing a depression screening service were reported to be a lack of time and not having the knowledge required.

OBJECTIVE:

- To investigate rural pharmacists' current practices, barriers, and preferred implementation strategies for implementing a depression screening service

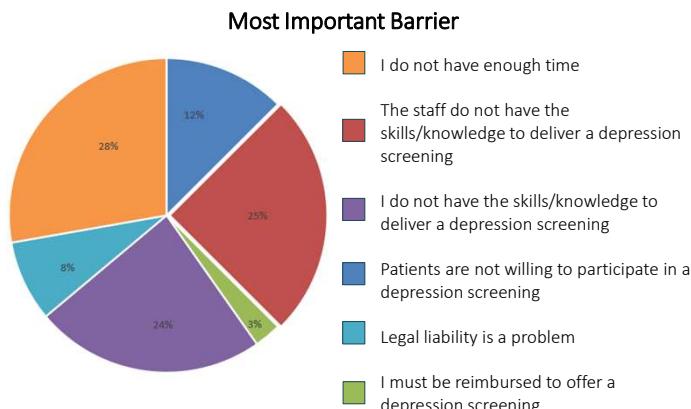
BACKGROUND:

- Depression is a leading cause of disability in persons over 15 years old
- Only 33-50% of people who are depressed seek and receive treatment
- Rates of mental health service utilization are lower in rural areas
- Rural pharmacists can help by offering depression screenings
- Depression screenings in pharmacies have been shown to be feasible and effective by increasing screenings of patients, improving medication therapy, and maintaining patient satisfaction

METHODS:

- A web-based survey was developed with a stakeholder panel consisting of two rural pharmacists, two rural community members who used pharmacies, and one psychologist
- Data collected: demographics, confidence, mental health stigma, barriers to implementing a depression screening service, and preferred implementation strategies among rural AL and MS pharmacists

Demographics N (%)		Implementation Strategies M (SD)	
State			
Alabama	37 (44)	Preparing an action plan	4.03 (0.89)
Mississippi	47 (56)	Establishing staff member roles	4.01 (0.84)
Gender			
Female	42 (50)	Selecting a person to oversee service	4.16 (0.87)
Male	42 (50)	Approaching management, corporate, or owners to gain support	3.81 (1.05)
Age			
19-24	1 (1)	Preparing an outreach/marketing plan	3.95 (0.89)
25-34	21 (25)	Establishing procedures	4.18 (0.86)
35-44	24 (29)	Setting a goal or objective	3.96 (0.91)
45-54	20 (24)	Adjusting prescription dispensing workflow	3.75 (1.06)
55-64	11 (13)	Arranging staff schedules	3.86 (0.96)
65 and above	7 (8)	Establishing procedures to identify patients	3.91 (0.89)
Race			
White	61 (73)	Establishing procedures to refer patients	4.00 (0.88)
Asian	13 (16)	Establishing procedure to follow-up with patients	4.05 (0.87)
African American	8 (10)	Developing a budget	3.96 (0.87)
Other	2 (1)	Establishing a plan to continuously evaluate and improve services	3.94 (0.87)
Ethnicity			
Non-Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish	2 (96)		
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish	2 (3)		
Prefer not to answer	1 (1)		



METHODS CONT.:

- The survey was sent by postcard to all pharmacists (n=621) practicing in rural Alabama and Mississippi identified using the Hayes directory (RUCA codes 4-10)

RESULTS:

- 83 of 621 (13%) rural pharmacists responded
- 79 (92%) did not offer a depression screening in their pharmacy and 71 (84.5%) were not familiar with the PHQ-9 (depression screening tool)
- Stigma toward patients with mental health conditions was 2.9 (SD=0.564) on a 1-5 scale, with 1 being low and 5 being high
- Average confidence in performing a depression screening was 2.5 (SD=1.1) on a 1-5 scale, with 1 being low and 5 being high
- Implementation strategies were rated on a 1-5 scale with 1 being "not at all helpful" and 5 being "extremely helpful"

CONCLUSION:

- Findings demonstrate deficiencies in confidence and knowledge of pharmacists concerning depression screenings as well as increased stigma, which may contribute to a low implementation of depression screening services in rural pharmacies.
- Limitations: Low % of pharmacists responded, self-selection bias, nonresponse bias

