

Packages of care for alcohol use disorders in low- and middle-income countries

October 27 2009

In the latest article in *PLoS Medicine*'s series proposing the delivery of "packages of care" for mental, neurological and substance-use disorders in low- and middle-income countries, Vivek Benegal and colleagues discuss the treatment of alcohol use disorders in settings where resources are limited. "Packages of care" are combinations of treatments aimed at improving the recognition and management of conditions to achieve optimal outcomes.

Alcohol misuse is responsible for a disproportionately high health burden, accounting for almost 5% of all ill-health and premature death worldwide in 2004. Yet, the treatment and prevention of [alcohol](#) use disorders is a low priority in low- and middle-income countries.

The authors report that health care systems in settings where resources are limited currently focus on providing tertiary care services for the treatment of alcohol dependence (where there is often a poor outcome), and exemplify that this focus needs to shift towards the cost-effective strategy of providing brief interventions for the earlier stages of alcohol use disorders.

More information: Benegal V, Chand PK, Obot IS (2009) Packages of Care for Alcohol Use Disorders in Low- And Middle-Income Countries. *PLoS Med* 6(10):e1000170.[doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1000170](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000170)

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Citation: Packages of care for alcohol use disorders in low- and middle-income countries (2009, October 27) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-10-packages-alcohol-disorders-low-middle-income.html>

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