

Physicians don't adequately monitor patients' medication adherence

July 16 2012

Patients' non-adherence to prescribed medication costs the U.S. health care system an estimated \$290 billion annually and can lead to poor clinical outcomes, increased hospitalizations and higher mortality.

In an effort to understand the extent to which [health care providers](#) feel responsible for their patients' [medication adherence](#), UCLA researchers and colleagues conducted focus-group discussions with providers and recorded out-patient office visits with 100 patients taking a total of 410 medications. They also examined how adherence discussions were initiated between providers and patients.

The researchers found that providers felt responsible for assessing and addressing adherence but believed patients were ultimately responsible. The researchers also found that physician–patient interactions were conducted in a way that might address adherence for 62 percent of the 410 medications; these interactions included simple inquiries about adherence for 31.5 percent of the medications but in-depth questions about adherence for only 4.3 percent of the medications. Patients spontaneously disclosed their non-adherence in 51 percent of 39 identified instances of non-adherence.

More information: The research is published in the June issue of the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

Provided by University of California, Los Angeles

Citation: Physicians don't adequately monitor patients' medication adherence (2012, July 16)
retrieved 10 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-07-physicians-dont-adequately-patients-medication.html>

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