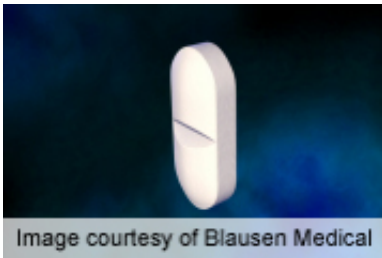


Rx for high-risk meds varies widely in medicare advantage

April 29 2013



There is wide variation in the prescription rates of high-risk medications among Medicare Advantage enrollees, according to a study published in the April issue of the *Journal of General Internal Medicine*.

(HealthDay)—There is wide variation in the prescription rates of high-risk medications (HRM) among Medicare Advantage (MA) enrollees, according to a study published in the April issue of the *Journal of General Internal Medicine*.

Danya M. Qato, Pharm.D., from Brown University in Providence, R.I., and colleagues retrospectively analyzed data from the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) for 6,204,824 seniors enrolled in 415 MA plans in 2009.

The researchers found that about 21 percent of MA enrollees received at least one HRM and 4.8 percent received at least two. Females had a 10.6 higher percentage point rate of receipt than males, in adjusted models.

As compared with the reference New England division, residence in any of the Southern U.S. divisions was also associated with a greater than 10 percentage point higher rate. Enrollees with low personal income (6.5 percentage points) and those residing in areas in the lowest quintile of [socioeconomic status](#) (2.7 points) also had higher rates. Medication was less likely to be received by enrollees 85 years and older as well as by those who were black or belonging to other [minority groups](#). Compared to the referral region with the lowest rate (Mason City, Iowa), MA enrollees residing in the hospital referral region of Albany, Ga., received at least one HRM at a four-fold higher rate.

"Persons living in the Southern region of the U.S., whites, women, and persons of low [personal income](#) and socioeconomic status are more likely to receive HRMs," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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Citation: Rx for high-risk meds varies widely in medicare advantage (2013, April 29) retrieved 1 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-04-rx-high-risk-meds-varies-widely.html>

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