

Potentially unsafe med scripts up for dual users with dementia

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(HealthDay)—For veterans with dementia, Veterans Affairs

(VA)-Medicare Part D (dual-system) users have increased rates of potentially unsafe medication (PUM) prescribing, according to a study published online Dec. 6 in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Joshua M. Thorpe, Ph.D., M.P.H., from the Veterans Affairs Pittsburgh Healthcare System, and colleagues conducted a [retrospective cohort study](#) in national VA outpatient care facilities in 2010 to examine the effect of dual health care system use on PUM prescribing. Data were included from 75,829 [veterans](#) with dementia: 80 percent were VA-only users and 20 percent were dual users.

The researchers found that dual users had more than double the odds of [exposure](#) to any PUM compared with VA-only users (odds ratio, 2.2) and had increased odds of exposure to PUM-Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) high-risk medication in older adults (PUM-HEDIS, odds ratio, 2.4) and any daily exposure to prescriptions with a cumulative Anticholinergic Cognitive Burden (ACB) score of 3 or higher (PUM-ACB, odds ratio, 2.1). Dual users also had higher odds of PUM-antipsychotic exposure (odds ratio, 1.5). For any-PUM exposure, dual users had 44.1 additional days of exposure.

"Among veterans with dementia, rates of PUM prescribing are significantly higher among dual-system users than with VA-only users," the authors write.

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