



Medication Adherence & Persistence

What is Medication Adherence?

The WHO defines medication adherence as the patient's conformance with the provider's recommendation with respect to timing, dosage, and frequency of medication-taking during the prescribed length of time.

What is Medication Persistence?

The duration of time a patient takes medication, from initiation to discontinuation of therapy.

Policies to improve medication persistence

- Medicare Part D should employ appointment-based **medication synchronization** for patients with multiple prescription medications.
 - Patients enrolled in a synchronization program exhibited adherence rates of 66.1-75.5% (depending on the drug class) versus 37-40.8% for those not enrolled.ⁱ
 - Sync patients were 3.4 to 6.1 times more likely to adhere to their medication regimens.ⁱ
 - Non-sync patients were 52-73% more likely to stop taking their chronic medications over 1 year (i.e. more likely to become non-persistence).ⁱ
- Medicare should cover **compliance-based packaging**, which improves medication adherence and persistence.
 - The medication possession ratio for patients with reminder packaging was 80% versus 73% for those without.ⁱⁱ
 - Proportion of days covered (PDC) was 76% (with reminder packaging) versus 63% without.ⁱⁱ
- **Pharmacy services** should be included within care coordination models as they significantly improve adherence and persistence to medications, which results in healthier patients.
 - Pharmacy service interventions improved adherence from 61.2% to 96.9% in 6 months.ⁱⁱⁱ
 - Pharmacy serve interventions also maintained medication persistence at 95.5% versus 69.1% for those patients assigned to usual care.ⁱⁱⁱ
 - Patients with the pharmacy services also had significantly healthier blood pressures.ⁱⁱⁱ

ⁱ Holdford D, Inocencio T. Adherence and persistence associated with an appointment-based medication synchronization program. *Journal of the American Pharmacists Association*. 2003;53:576-583.

ⁱⁱ Dupclay, L, et al. Real-world impact of reminder packaging on antihypertensive treatment adherence and persistence. *Patient Preference and Adherence*. 2012; 6: 499-507.

ⁱⁱⁱ Lee JK, Grace KA, Taylor AJ. Effect of a pharmacy care program on medication adherence and persistence, blood pressure, and low-density lipoprotein cholesterol: A randomized controlled trial. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 2006;296:2563-2571.