What Drives Primary Care Providers to Screen Women Veterans for Cardiovascular Risks with Competing Demands and Limited Time?

Patient Factors Associated with Template Use in the VA

Bevanne Bean-Mayberry, MD, MHS1,2, Catherine Chanfreau, PhD3, Kimberly Clair, PhD1, Claire Than, PhD1, Julian Brunner, PhD1, C. Amanda Schweizer, PhD, MPH1, Erin Finley, PhD, MPH4,5, Alison Hamilton, PhD, MPH1,2, Melissa M. Farmer, PhD1

1 Center for the Study of Healthcare Innovation, Implementation & Policy (CSHIIP), VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, Los Angeles, CA; 2 UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine, Los Angeles, CA; 3 VA Informatics and Computing Infrastructure (VINCI), VA Salt Lake City Healthcare System, Salt Lake City, UT; 4 Veterans Evidence-based Research, Dissemination, and Implementation Center (VERDICT), South Texas Veterans Healthcare System, San Antonio, TX; 5 Departments of General & Hospital Medicine & Psychiatry, University of Texas Health Science Center, San Antonio, TX.

Background

- Cardiovascular (CV) disease is the #1 cause of death in US women
- One in three American women has some form of CV disease
- Extensive evidence shows that lifestyle behaviors contribute detrimentally to CV risk
- We implemented a CV Toolkit designed to improve women Veterans’ engagement and retention in evidenced-based healthcare for CV risk identification and risk-reduction

Study Objective

- To identify patient factors associated with primary care (PC) provider screening (e.g., use of CV Toolkit template) and CV goal setting

Methods

Study Design: Implementation of the CV Toolkit comprised of a patient CV self-screener, provider CV template, and goal setting group to promote CV risk identification and patient engagement in preventive behavior change at five VA sites across the US

Key Findings

- Despite competing demands and time pressure, the template helped PC providers identify patients in need of CV risk intervention and make referrals for behavior change, especially older women and those who were overweight or obese.
- During the clinical visit, the template driven patient-provider referrals occurred for 72% of women with template action steps – most referrals focused on CV lifestyle and mental health needs.
- Next steps call for simple, innovative tools to help patients and providers continue to define (and re-define) CV goals to sustain lifestyle improvements, especially among women with mental health conditions such as PTSD.

Limitations

- Findings were drawn from five VA clinics

Conclusions

- Findings were drawn from five VA clinics

Population: women Veterans seen in the PC clinics (Dec 2016 – Mar 2020)

Data and Measures: VA Corporate Data Warehouse (administrative data) for demographics, CV risk, utilization and mental health diagnosis

Analyses:

- Examined factors associated with CV template completed versus not utilizing chi-square/t-tests and logistic regression to model template completion adjusting for clustering within sites
- On completed CV templates, we identified common referrals

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