

Purpose of the Project

- Conduct a gap analysis evaluating the differences between current practice and evidence-based recommendations
- To develop a tailored toolkit for healthcare providers to optimize pharmacological management of older adults

Background & Significance

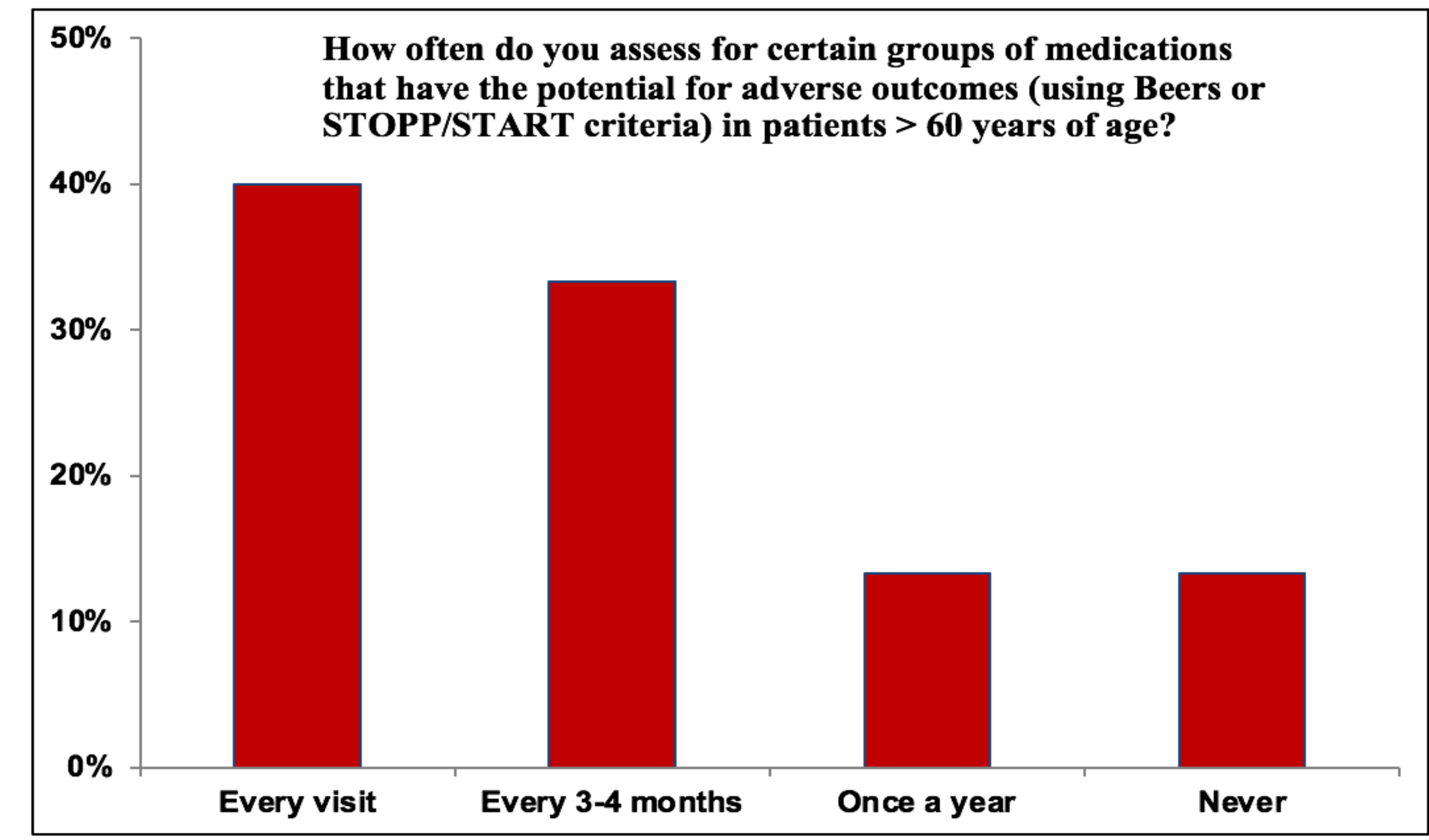
- *Polypharmacy*: use of 5 or more medications simultaneously
 - **39%** of older adults take five or more daily medications to manage or treat chronic conditions
- Polypharmacy leads to health outcomes such as adverse drug reactions, drug toxicity, falls, delirium, and preventable hospitalizations.
 - **20%** of adverse drug reactions are attributed to drug interactions
 - **11%** of hospital admissions are due to polypharmacy-related adverse effects and **50%** are preventable
 - Inappropriate prescribing and polypharmacy costs the United States over **\$177 billion annually**
- Despite healthcare providers' awareness of negative health consequences of polypharmacy, a consistent approach to its management is lacking

Methods

- **Design:** Gap analysis to identify practice gaps between the current state vs. the desired state of practice
- **Setting:** A suburban care practice system including four offices within Monmouth County, New Jersey
- **Sample:** Healthcare providers (MDs, DOs, NPs, PAs) at the practice system providing care to older adult patients
- **Data Collection:**
 - Participants completed a 9-question electronic survey over 4 weeks regarding current practices of polypharmacy management
- **Analysis:**
 - Descriptive statistics (means, percentages) used for each survey question independently
- **Intervention:**
 - An evidence-based toolkit was developed to address identified gaps in practice (the toolkit included evidence-based resources for screening, managing polypharmacy, and deprescribing protocols)

Results

- The gap analysis included a total of 15 healthcare providers
- Less than half of healthcare providers (**40%**) report utilizing evidence-based screening tools to assess for high-risk drug therapy at every visit



Frequency	Percentage
Every visit	40%
Every 3-4 months	33%
Once a year	13%
Never	13%

Discussion & Implications

- Consistent with prior research results, this survey demonstrated that majority of healthcare providers underutilize evidence-based recommendations and screening tools when managing polypharmacy in older adults
- Use of the evidence-based toolkit created may improve healthcare providers' polypharmacy management, deprescribing practices, and decrease healthcare costs
- Political commitment, policy-maker involvement, and multidisciplinary collaboration is crucial in facilitating appropriate polypharmacy

Scan QR code for contact information, summary results table, references & toolkit

