

High Emergency Department Users: Older Adults with Diabetes and Prescription Medications | Ontario

What is the Issue?

Older adults with diabetes frequently have at least one more chronic condition and are likely to use multiple medications. Understanding what medications are being used is important to ensuring that they are being used to maximize benefit and minimize potential harm.

Key Features of this Study:

Using health data from Ontario, two groups were identified:

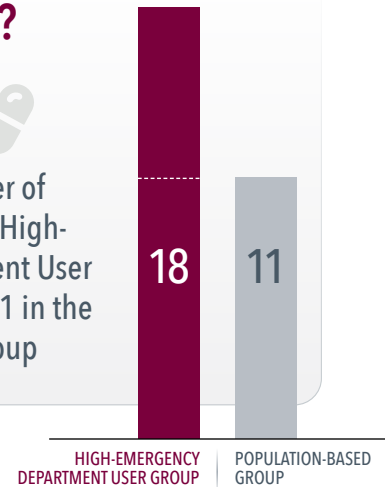
- 1) High-Emergency Department User Group:** Those in the top 10% for number of emergency department visits within a year.
- 2) Population-Based Group:** A random sample of community-living older adults living with diabetes.



Did you know?

18

is the average number of medications used by High-Emergency Department User Group compared to 11 in the Population-Based Group



The **High-Emergency Department User Group** and the **Population-Based Group** were compared on the prescription medications they used.

Shown below is the frequency of selected medications for each group.



High-Emergency Department Users were also more likely to use **4 or more Antibiotics** in a single year.



High-Emergency Department User Group

Population-Based Group

74%

Statins

74%

49%

Metformin

53%

48%

Diuretics

33%

29%

Antidepressants

19%

27%

Insulin

16%

20%

Dpp4S

21%

Dipeptidyl peptidase - 4 Inhibitors

Key Messages: Implications for Clinical Practice and Policy Considerations

- The use of several medications, known as polypharmacy, was common among older adults with diabetes and included both medications for diabetes and other conditions.
- Regular and thorough medication reviews should be provided to older adults with diabetes to ensure that they are receiving the right medications for their needs and that potential drug interactions have been considered.

A comprehensive long-term strategy needs to be developed that focuses on all of these factors.

This infographic was developed on behalf of the ACHRU-CPP Research Team in collaboration with Lynne Mansell (patient/caregiver public partner) and Paige Blainey (ACHRU trainee). References available upon request. | achru.mcmaster.ca