

Assessing the Impact of Long-Acting Injectable (LAI) on Psychiatric Treatment Outcomes among Medicaid Beneficiaries: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.

ABSTRACT

ISSUE: Long-acting injectable (LAI) and oral antipsychotics are currently prescribed to treat schizophrenia. However, few patients diagnosed with schizophrenia adhere to antipsychotic medications due to cognitive challenges, access to care, finances, transportation, etc. resulting in rehospitalizations, symptoms returning and poor quality of life. The use of LAI antipsychotics seems promising in increasing medication compliance among patients with schizophrenia.

PURPOSE AND AIMS: We conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of existing literature to examine the comparative effectiveness of LAIs versus oral antipsychotics on medication adherence, symptoms, readmission / rehospitalizations, outpatient and emergency room visits, healthcare costs, and social functioning among patients with schizophrenia.

FINDINGS: Our review and analysis of 76 articles meeting our inclusion criteria showed that LAIs improved medication adherence, lowered symptom severity, and decreased the number of rehospitalizations and emergency room visits as compared to oral antipsychotics. However, LAIs were not superior to oral antipsychotics in decreasing the number of outpatient visits and pharmacy costs. These findings have policy and practice implications as they suggest that prescribing LAIs may result in better adherence and lower symptom recurrence, a lower number of rehospitalizations and emergency room visits, and lower medical costs compared to oral antipsychotics among individuals with schizophrenia.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Scaling up use of LAIs to address gaps in medication adherence, lower symptom severity and decrease number of rehospitalizations and emergency room visits among individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia.
2. Conduct provider and patient education to enhance their awareness of benefits and limitations of using LAIs in managing symptoms of schizophrenia.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ Schizophrenia is a chronic mental illness affecting more than 21 million people globally.
- ▶ Long-acting injectable (LAI) and oral antipsychotics are types of antipsychotic medications currently prescribed to treat symptoms of schizophrenia among adults.
- ▶ Though antipsychotic medications are considered effective in managing schizophrenia symptoms, a majority of patients diagnosed with schizophrenia do not adhere to the recommended antipsychotic medication.
- ▶ Evidence suggests that LAIs may improve medication adherence, lower symptoms, and decrease the number of rehospitalization and emergency room visits as compared to oral antipsychotics.