Suggested Resources

Free Software and Online Educational Resources

Epocrates Introduces Part D Formulary Software

To help physicians and pharmacists work with their ALF residents and other patients through the implementation of the new Medicare Part D drug benefit, California-based Epocrates, Inc. is making Part D formulary information available to its network of nearly 500,000 health care professionals. All Medicare Part D drug plan formularies will be available on Epocrates free and premium mobile and web-based clinical solutions.

The introduction of Medicare Part D, which has doubled the number of plans that physicians and pharmacists need to be familiar with, has raised concerns about how health care professionals will be able to handle the additional responsibilities while maintaining their current level of patient care and service. A recent survey conducted by Epocrates showed that nearly 60% of physicians estimate that time spent on administrative tasks will increase by 20%, while nearly 70% of pharmacists anticipate that callbacks to physicians will increase by 20%. (See Figure 1 for other key findings of the survey.)

With the Epocrates formulary tool, a clinician can:
- Quickly check if a drug is covered by a particular health plan, such as Humana and Aetna
- Identify prior authorization requirements and co-pay levels
- Search for generic and lower cost alternatives.

These features enable physicians to have real-time discussions with patients regarding treatment options prior to prescribing a medication. In addition, physicians can consult the formulary guide when dispensing medication if coverage is denied or patients have questions regarding their drug plan. The Epocrates software is expected to save physicians up to an hour of time each week and pharmacists two or more hours.

For more information about this software, see the Epocrates Web site at **www.epocrates.com**.

Free for Nurses

There are a number of software and educational programs available free to nurses. Among the offerings of interest to practitioners serving ALFs:
- A free CEU program for nurses on Female Urinary Incontinence is available from the Women's Health

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Figure 1.
Key Findings of Epocrates Medicare Part D Survey*

- The primary concerns of pharmacists and physicians are their inability to address questions from patients regarding drug coverage and additional administrative burdens.

- Nearly 90% of pharmacists have heard concerns from their elderly patients about the new Medicare prescription drug program, compared to about half of physicians surveyed.

- More than 70% of physicians and nearly 60% of pharmacists believe that the new drug benefit will increase the quality of care for seniors.

- Eighty-five percent of physicians and pharmacists believe that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and health plans are most responsible for disseminating information about the new prescription drug plan.

- More than 50% of physicians rate their knowledge of the Medicare Part D program as "fair" or "poor."

*Respondents included 604 randomly selected physicians and pharmacists nationally who are part of the Epocrates Honors® Panel, a health care professional market research panel.

Foundation. A comprehensive article is designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of nurses caring for female residents with urinary incontinence. The program is worth a maximum 2 hours of CEUs. *To access the article and/or take the test, go to* **www.rizvimd.com/nurses.htm**.

- The "NursingBar" is a free Internet Explorer Toolbar that increases nurses' ability to find nursing and health care related information from anywhere on the Web. Its features include nursing calculators (IV, P.O., Solids, etc.), a drug search function, a medical dictionary, and a medical encyclopedia. *Download this tool at* **www.nursingbar.com**.

- "HealthMonitor" is a Windows program for storing weight, blood pressure, drug regimen, etc. The measurements can be viewed on a daily basis, weekly average, or monthly average by various charts. Nurses can download it free and register it at $19 only if they find it useful. *Download this product at* **www.nurses.com/Downloads**.

We welcome your input.

Please send your

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Q&A *(continued from page 41)*

14. In senior setting where there is less supervision over medication management and where residents self-medicate, there are more errors such as:
   a. Taking expired or discontinued medications
   b. Taking medications from different prescribers that can cause interactions
   c. Taking over-the-counter drugs that interact with prescription medications
   d. All of the above
   e. A and c only

15. Before implemented a new medication management system, it is important to:
   a. Consider cost over safety issues
   b. Clean up current medication issues and problems
   c. Pursue a state-of-the-art system with all the bells and whistles
   d. None of the above

16. What is a major challenge in introducing a new medication management system to residents?
   a. Overcoming resistence
   b. Language barriers
   c. Family refusal to pay
   d. Cognitive impairment   ALC

Please see Answer Key below.

Answer Key			
1. c	2. d	3. e	4. b
5. a	6. b	7. c	8. b
9. c	10. a	11. c	12. a
13. c	14. d	15. b	16. a

Resources *(continued from page 42)*

- Crossroad Software has several software programs for handheld computers that can be downloaded free for a 30-day trial. *See the catalog of available software at* **www.crossroads-software. com/PDA-MedicalSoftware/ Catalog.**

Online Stroke Caregivers Handbook Available

A "Stroke Caregivers Handbook" can be printed or downloaded free from **www.strokesafe.org/Handbook.html**. Produced by an expert task force compiled by Stroke Awareness for Everyone (SAFE), the book includes five chapters: Stroke: An Equal Opportunity Attack, Acute Care, Moving On to Rehabilitation, Home Sweet Home, Nursing Homes—Never Say Never (Again).

Download Free Medical and Legal Forms

A number of commonly used medical and legal forms can be downloaded at **www.familycaregiversonline.com/legal-medical.html**. Available forms include advance directives, last will and testament, and state power of attorney. There also are forms relating to estate planning and marital and family issues.

Medscape Offers Free Nursing CE

Medscape offers free, continuously updated continuing education activities at **www.medscape.com/ pjsp/cme/public/cmeinfo.html** for physicians, registered nurses, pharmacists, and other health professionals. All activities listed in the Nurse CE Center have been produced in collaboration with nursing-accredited approved CE providers. Topics currently available include infectious diseases and vascular disorders. Also online are programs from national meetings of gerontological nurse practitioners. See **www.medscape.com/ cmecenterdirectory/nurses**.   ALC