
HYPERTENSION CONTROL AND CHOLESTEROL MANAGEMENT

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

July 2024

TOOLKIT OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

Improving patients' hypertension control and optimizing their cholesterol management often takes ongoing conversations and education. It also requires continuous effort from all care team members to stay current on the latest evidence-based care and treatment strategies and effectively communicate them with patients.

NACHC has created the Hypertension and Cholesterol Management Communication Toolkit to assist **health center leaders, communicators, quality improvement specialists, and clinical care coordinators in Health Care Center Networks (HCCNs) and Primary Care Associations (PCAs)**. The purpose of this toolkit is to help share evidence-based messages about controlling hypertension and managing cholesterol with care teams and patients.

The toolkit includes content for internal care team emails, e-newsletters, and social media posts intended for health professional colleagues or health center patients. These templates are designed to encourage collaboration, offer best practices, and provide resources to help clinicians and care teams effectively assist patients diagnosed with hypertension and high cholesterol in managing their chronic diseases.

We hope you'll use or adapt these templates to facilitate conversations among clinicians and care teams to enhance patients' control of hypertension, optimize cholesterol management, and address patient concerns.

Content can be customized to best meet the communication goals of each care team and health center.

EMAIL TEMPLATES FOR HEALTH CENTER CLINICIANS AND CARE TEAMS

Sample Email about Optimizing Cholesterol Management

SUBJECT: Resources to Optimize Cholesterol Management and Address Patient Concerns about Statin Therapy

Dear [HEALTH CENTER CLINICIAN AND CARE TEAM STAFF],

As a team, we are always working to enhance our approach to helping our patients who are at risk for atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease, or ASCVD, to optimize their cholesterol management. I would like to share some valuable resources that can help us improve our cholesterol management protocols and have meaningful discussions with patients about reducing their risks of heart disease and stroke, especially addressing their concerns about statin therapy.

While we understand that lifestyle changes such as diet and exercise are important for maintaining cardiovascular health, we also recognize the significant benefits of prescribing statins for patients struggling with cholesterol management or at elevated risk of a cardiovascular event. However, many patients have questions and concerns about statins, and some are hesitant or influenced by misinformation that can impact their overall cardiovascular risk management.

When discussing statins with patients, it is essential to anticipate questions and provide reliable educational resources. Some patients require multiple discussions to decide to begin statin therapy and support to sustain it. We have learned that ongoing engagement is key to enhancing adherence and improving outcomes.

To help you with when talking with patients about cholesterol management and statins, here are a few evidenced-based resources I recommend.

- [Q&A Common Patient Questions About Statins](#)
- [How Do Statins Prevent Heart Attacks and Strokes Infographic \(English\)](#)
- [How Do Statins Prevent Heart Attacks and Strokes Infographic \(Spanish\)](#)
- [The Importance of Statin Medications: Jeanette's Story \(Video\)](#)

In addition, below are two comprehensive resources that I recommend we review and discuss during an upcoming team huddle or staff meeting. The information in these resources can help our team optimize our overall cholesterol management processes.

- [Million Hearts® Cholesterol Management Change Package \(CMCP\)](#): Recently released by the CDC, the new CMCP is a collection of specific interventions designed to improve cholesterol management. It provides a range of strategies to help change care processes and offers evidence- or practice-based tools and resources.
- [Treating Patients with Statins: Tips from a Clinician to Clinicians \(Video\)](#)

Thank you for reviewing these resources. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on how we can incorporate them or other effective strategies into our cholesterol management practice and discussions with our patients to improve their health outcomes.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

[Your Title/Position]

[Your Contact Information]

Sample Email to Care Teams about Hypertension Control Resources

SUBJECT: Resources and Strategies for Hypertension Control

Dear [HEALTH CENTER CLINICIAN AND CARE TEAM STAFF],

Improving patients' hypertension control often requires continuous conversations, education, and effort from all care team members. This includes staying up-to-date on the latest evidence-based care and treatment strategies and effectively communicating them with patients.

I encourage all of us to closely examine our clinical approach for patients with hypertension and at risk for heart diseases and strokes who need treatment. Specifically, we should consider the benefits of intensifying treatment using combination therapy to achieve better control of hypertension.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is crucial for cardiovascular health. However, [research](#) indicates that intensifying treatment with two classes of anti-hypertensive medications, preferably in a fixed-dose combination (one pill), can significantly improve outcomes for patients who are having difficulty achieving adequate blood pressure control. In fact, most individuals require both approaches to reach their blood pressure goals. This is when treatment intensification should be considered.

Three of the most impactful medication treatment strategies to improve blood pressure control are:

1. Rapid treatment intensification
2. Increasing the frequency of follow-up
3. Improving medication adherence

This month, I encourage all of us to focus on medication intensification to enhance our efforts in managing hypertension. I've found some easy-to-understand resources that may be helpful when counseling our patients with hypertension. Let me know which ones you and our patients find helpful.

- [Effects of Uncontrolled Hypertension](#)
- [Simplify your Pill Routine](#)
- [Making SMBP Work for Your Patients: Tips for Community Health Centers \(Video\)](#)
- [Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Change Package \(HCCP\), 2nd ed.:](#) The HCCP provides a list of process improvements that can help health centers achieve optimal hypertension control. It includes concepts, ideas, and evidence- or practice-based tools and resources.
- [Did You Knows and Quick Tips \(DYKQT\)-Improving Blood Pressure Control](#)

Thanks for reviewing these resources. I'm excited to know your ideas on how we can use them or other effective strategies in our clinical practice and discussions with our hypertensive patients to help improve their health outcomes.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

[Your Title/Position]

[Your Contact Information]

INTERNAL E-NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCEMENT: EDUCATIONAL CHOLESTEROL MANAGEMENT VIDEOS

We are always looking at the high-impact work of our colleagues from other health centers. One of our colleagues, Dr. Johan Torres, is the Chief Medical Information Officer at Miami Beach Community Health Center. Dr. Torres has collaborated with the National Association of Community Health Centers to create two educational videos on optimizing cholesterol management for high-risk patients. In these videos, he provides valuable insights on discussing statin use with patients and addresses common questions and concerns. One of the videos is targeted at healthcare professionals, while the other is intended for our patients, particularly those who have reservations about using statins.

The short videos offer great real-life perspectives, insights, and strategies for optimizing patient care. Please take a few minutes to watch and share them and let me know if they are helpful.

Clinician-Focused Video: Dr. Torres provides strategies for clinicians to effectively coach their patients in optimal statin use. The video covers initiating prescriptions, fostering adherence, and dispelling common misconceptions. It's filled with best practices and insights tailored for our clinician audience and is a must-watch for anyone looking to enhance their approach to statin prescribing.

Patient Journey Video: Follow Jeanette, a patient of Dr. Torres, as she shares her journey to adhering to statin treatment. This powerful narrative aims to help patients understand the impact of statin adherence. Jeanette's relatable story is meant to motivate patients to start taking statins as recommended by their healthcare provider and to stick to their treatment plan.

SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATES FOR CLINICIANS, CARE TEAMS, AND PATIENTS

Here are some template posts and social media graphics that you and your organization can use to raise awareness about best practices in managing cholesterol and hypertension.

Social Media Campaign Tips

- Use our captions, tailoring the message for your needs and audiences. Use the yellow highlighted phrases as a guide for customization.
- Create posts for your social media platforms and schedule them in advance to post on a specific date.
- Tag (@) relevant organizations or individuals in the post caption for broader reach.

Cholesterol Management

Content Theme: Quality Improvement Best Practices

Posts for Clinicians/Care Teams

- *DYK?* In most cases, statin intolerance is over-estimated & over-diagnosed. Around 93% of patients on statin therapy can be treated effectively, with excellent tolerability. Statins significantly lower LDL & decrease the risk of heart attacks & strokes. Share the facts about statin therapy with your patients to optimize their cholesterol management. Check out [Million Hearts® Did You Knows and Quick Tips for Preventing Heart Attacks and Strokes](#) to help answer your patients' questions on managing their cholesterol and statin use.
#CholesterolManagement #StatinTherapy
- Patients at high risk for #ASCVD need targeted treatment! While lifestyle changes are essential, they may not be enough to reduce LDL levels sufficiently. Statins are a highly effective treatment and decrease the risk of heart attacks and strokes. Educate your patients on the benefits of statin therapy & encourage regular use. #CholesterolManagement #StatinTherapy

Posts for Patients

- At high risk for heart disease and strokes? Lifestyle changes are a must, but sometimes they're not enough. Statins medications have been proven to save lives. They can help lower LDL levels & reduce your risk of heart attacks and strokes. Learn more at [\[INSERT HEALTH CENTER WEBSITE\]](#) #CholesterolManagement #StatinTherapy

Content Theme: Implementing Evidence-Based Guidelines for Cholesterol Management

Post for Clinicians/Care Teams

- Did you know that lifestyle changes alone may not be sufficient to lower LDL in high-risk patients? It is crucial to educate your patients about the vital role of cholesterol-lowering treatments like statin therapies play in reducing the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

Let's share the facts about statins, correct misinformation, and help our patients understand that statins save lives. Have them watch this short video, "How Do Statins Prevent Heart Attacks and Strokes." It is available in [English](#) & [Spanish](#) . #CholesterolManagement #StatinsSaveLives #PatientEducation"

Post for Patients

- Do you have high cholesterol? If so, you're at high risk for heart disease and strokes. Exercising regularly & avoiding foods high in saturated fat are crucial, but more is needed. Cholesterol-lowering medications, including statins, can significantly help you lower and manage cholesterol. They have been proven to save lives. Talk to your healthcare provider about the benefits of statin therapy and making them part of your heart-healthy lifestyle! #CholesterolManagement #StatinTherapy

Content Theme: Addressing Concerns and Educating Patients About Statins

Posts for Clinicians/Care Teams

- Remember the importance of ongoing conversations! For high-risk cardiovascular patients, regular discussions about continuing statin therapy are essential. Address concerns & share resources to ensure they stay on track. Check out "[Did You Knows](#)" and [Quick Tips to Prevent Heart Attacks and Strokes](#) to start the statin conversation or keep it going. #CholesterolManagement #StatinTherapy #PatientEducation
- Don't underestimate the power of patient education! Patients who understand their cholesterol management plan are more likely to adhere to treatment and achieve better outcomes. Take time to explain the benefits and safety of statins and the importance of lifestyle changes. #CholesterolManagement #PatientEducation

Post for Patients

- Are you considering statin therapy to help lower and manage your cholesterol, but have questions? Contact our [Health Center] to learn more about statins, their benefits, & why they save lives. Our dedicated team will tailor your treatment plan & help you lower and manage your cholesterol. Together, we can help you live your best life! #PatientEducation #CholesterolManagement

Content theme: Highlighting Care Team Successes

- The success stories keep pouring in at our health center as more patients experience the benefits of effective cholesterol management! **[INSERT SUCCESS YOU WANT TO HIGHLIGHT]**
Let's continue this momentum together! #CholesterolManagement #HealthCenterAchievements

Hypertension Control

Content Theme: Quality Improvement Best Practices

Post for Clinician/Care Team

- As clinicians, we play a crucial role in helping our patients control their hypertension. Stay current on the latest best practices by incorporating team-based care and acting rapidly to address uncontrolled blood pressure. Check out [Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Change Package](#) to find evidence-based tools, resources & strategies. #HypertensionControl #ClinicianTips #TeamBasedCare

Content Theme: Implementing Evidence-Based Guidelines

Posts for Clinicians/Care Team

- Did you know that effectively controlling hypertension can significantly reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke? Utilizing a three-pillar practical approach & resources from the [Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Change Package](#) can enhance patient care and achieve better blood pressure control outcomes. Let's make hypertension control a top priority in our practice. #HypertensionControl #PatientCare #PreventiveHealth

We know that empowering our patients to take charge of their health is key to managing chronic diseases like hypertension. I find the latest [Hypertension Guideline](#) is a great resource when looking to optimize treatment plans for my patients with high blood pressure. **[For those with uncontrolled hypertension, I schedule follow-up visits every 2-4 weeks to track progress & make adjustments.]** What is working with your patients? Welcome all comments.
#ClinicalBestPractices #HypertensionControl #PatientEmpowerment #ClinicalBestPractices
#HypertensionControl #PatientEmpowerment #ClinicalBestPractices #HypertensionControl
#PatientEmpowerment

Content Theme: Addressing Concerns & Educating Patients About Uncontrolled Hypertension

Post for Clinicians/Care Teams

- Educating patients about their heart health is key to helping them reduce their risks for heart diseases and strokes. As clinicians, we must empower our patients with knowledge about how uncontrolled high blood pressure affects bodies, overall health and how they simply live life. We can address their concerns, provide resources, and foster open communication to support their journey to better health. Share the [Effects of Uncontrolled Hypertension](#) to jumpstart conversations with your high-risk patients today. #PatientEducation #HypertensionControl

Post for Patients

- Have questions about anti-hypertension medications? Have you heard about combination therapies to help lower and control your blood pressure? Do you know what they are? Our team

@ HEALTH CENTER can answer all your questions to help you lower and manage your hypertension. We will give you the facts, tailor your treatment plan to minimize adverse effects and support you on your successful journey to live your best life. #PatientEducation #HypertensionControl

Content Theme: Highlighting Care Team Successes

- DYK our health center/team has seen **[SUCCESS TEAM WANTS TO HIGHLIGHT]?** Our dedicated care team inspires patients to be informed, educated, and empowered; transforming them into active partners in their care and to live their best lives. #HypertensionControl #PatientEngagement #HealthCenterSuccess

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS

Social media graphics have been sized for Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Click on the links below to download.

- [Care Team Success Template Graphic](#)
- [Images for Social Content](#)

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