



Promoting High-Quality Cardiovascular Care by Promoting the Adoption of Secondary Prevention Guidelines

Public Health Problem

Heart disease is the number one cause of death in Texas, and stroke is close behind at number three. Together, heart disease and stroke are the number one drain on health care resources in the state. Hospital charges in Texas for ischemic heart disease, hemorrhagic stroke, ischemic stroke, and congestive heart failure were an estimated \$7.5 billion in 2002.

Program Example

In February and April 2003, the Texas Cardiovascular Health and Wellness Program held forums with representatives of major health systems to develop strategies for improving quality of care for the secondary prevention of heart disease and stroke. Participants were from health plan organizations, the Texas Medical Association, the American Heart Association Texas Affiliate and its national office, hospitals, business groups, the state's quality improvement organization, and other health care systems. Three strategies were identified as a result of this collaborative effort, known as the Texas Cardiovascular Quality and Patient Safety Initiative: promote the adoption of the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology secondary prevention guidelines, identify physicians who can be leaders and champions in promoting adoption of these guidelines, and develop a program to recognize hospitals and providers that adopt and follow the guidelines. The initiative covers primary and specialty care and hospital settings.

Implications and Impact

The Texas initiative shows how state cardiovascular health programs can provide the leadership needed to bring together key health care organizations to develop system interventions that promote the adoption of secondary prevention guidelines. Universal adoption of these guidelines can help to eliminate health disparities and help people with heart disease and stroke have better health outcomes, including improved quality of life and reduced risk for recurrent events.