



Effective Health Care

Depression Screening in the Elderly Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Depression screening in the elderly was found to be addressed by an AHRQ report for the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) that is in the process of being updated. Given that the in-process AHRQ report covers this nomination, no further activity will be undertaken on this topic.
 - Pignone M, Gaynes BN, Rushton JL, et al. Screening for Depression. Systematic Evidence Review No. 6. Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. April 2002.
<http://www.ahrq.gov/downloads/pub/prevent/pdfser/depser.pdf> (Update in progress)
- To sign up for notification when this and other USPSTF topics are posted, please go to <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/prevenix.htm>.

Topic Description

Nominator: Individual

Nomination Summary: The nominator is interested in the effectiveness of screening for depression in the elderly.

Key Questions from Nominator: 1. Among elderly patients presenting for routine health visits, does aggressive screening for depression as compared to no screening yield a higher diagnosis code of depression?

Considerations

- This topic was also found to be addressed by the 2002 AHRQ report titled *Screening for Depression*. This report is currently being updated as a targeted systematic review titled *Screening for Depression in Adults and Older Adults in Primary Care* to facilitate the update of the 2002 USPSTF recommendations. Key questions from this update report include:
 1. Is there direct evidence that screening for depression among adults and the elderly in primary care reduces morbidity and/or mortality?

- a. What is the impact of clinician feedback of screening test results (with or without additional care management support) on depression response and remission in screen-detected depressed patients receiving usual care?
2. What are the adverse effects of screening for depressive disorders in adults and in elderly patients in primary care?
3. Is antidepressant and/or psychotherapy treatment of elderly depressed patients effective in improving health outcomes?
4. What are the adverse effects of antidepressant treatment (particularly SSRIs and other second-generation drugs) for depression in adults and the elderly?