

SEDATIVE PRESCRIBING RATES IN ELDERLY PATIENTS

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CONTEXT

- Choosing Wisely Canada is a campaign to improve the quality of care to patients by reducing unnecessary tests and treatments
- One of the recommendations is that sedatives should not be prescribed as first line treatment in the elderly for insomnia, agitation, or delirium because of increased risks (e.g., falls)
- Many elderly patients are still prescribed a sedative



OBJECTIVES

To examine the rates of sedatives prescribed to patients aged 65 years or older by Northern Alberta Primary Care Research Network (NAPCRen) sentinels contributing to the Canadian Primary Care Sentinel Surveillance Network (CPCSSN)

DESIGN & METHODS

- Secondary data analysis was done using the NAPCRen-CPCSSN regional database
- Active patients are defined as patients with at least one encounter in the previous two years
- Data analysis was primarily descriptive in nature with frequency distributions and percentages. The χ^2 test was used to test for relationships between discrete variables



FINDINGS

- Data was obtained on 8479 patients ≥ 65 who visited their primary care provider in the last two years
- The average age of the cohort was 74.6 ± 7.6
- Variation in sedative prescriptions ranged between 9.4% - 29.7% in the 14 clinics in the NAPCRen database

Gender	Prescribed a Sedative				
	All	Urban	Rural	Academic	Community
Male	15.8% (592/3751)	14.8% (401/2703)	18.2% (191/1048)	16.0% (186/1160)	15.7% (406/2591)
Female	23.8% (1124/4722)	23.1% (826/3581)	26.1% (298/1141)	26.0% (401/1544)	22.8% (723/3178)

- In all clinic settings, significantly more females were prescribed a sedative than males ($p=0.00$)

FINDINGS

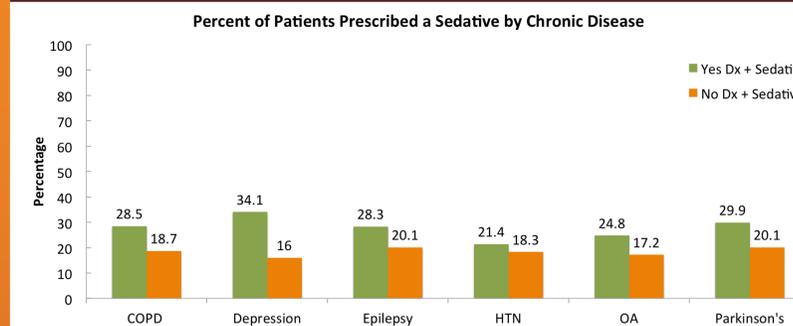
# of Encounters	Prescribed a Sedative
1-3	8.6% (128/1487)
4-6	13.0% (248/1911)
7-9	18.4% (310/1682)
10-12	24.9% (283/1136)
13+	33.1% (747/2260)

- Patients that have been prescribed a sedative over a two-year period ($p=0.00$)

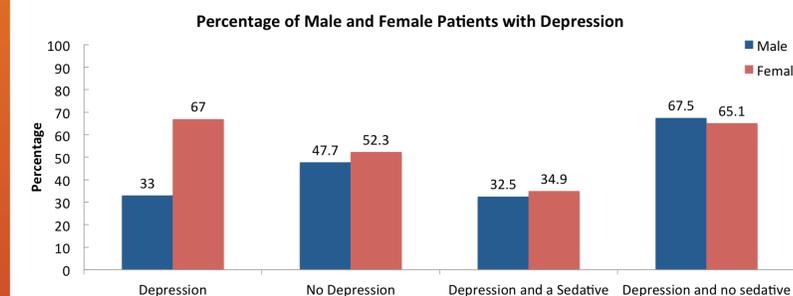
# of Encounters	Depression
1-3	14.4% (214/1487)
4-6	16.7% (320/1911)
7-9	21.6% (364/1682)
10-12	26.4% (300/1136)
13+	35.3% (797/2260)

- Patients that had a CPCSSN diagnosis of depression, which includes past and present history of depression ($p=0.00$)

FINDINGS



- Patients with a chronic disease were more likely to have had a sedative prescription than if they did not have a chronic disease. As well, patients that had depression were most likely to have had a sedative prescription compared to other chronic diseases



- In the NAPCRen database, patients with depression were predominately females ($p<0.00$)
- There was no significant difference in the percentage of sedative prescriptions between males and females with a history of depression

DISCUSSION

- The CPCSSN database is a rich source of data that can provide primary care providers with information on their prescribing rates
- Secondary analysis of the NAPCRen data showed that a substantial number of elderly patients are being prescribed a sedative despite advice from Choosing Wisely Canada