

Depression Screenings for MSSP Patients

Depression is one of the most common mental health disorders seen in patients by providers today. It's often termed the "silent illness" as very few patients feel comfortable discussing depressive symptoms directly with their physicians. According to the *Primary Care Companion to the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, more than half of "outpatient medical visits are for somatic complaints, which are often associated with depression and anxiety."

For our Scripps ACO members participating in the Medicare Shared Savings Program (MSSP), one of the ACO quality measures is ACO Measure #40 for depression remission at 12 months. It's encouraged to administer routine depression screenings with your MSSP patients as this is a pay-for-reporting quality measure and contributes to the overall quality score for the provider and the ACO. Not to mention incorporating depression screenings is becoming a best practice as part of a patient's routine visit.

A suggested tool to administer depression screenings with your patients is by utilizing the attached nine-question patient health questionnaire (PHQ-9). The PHQ-9 tool helps to create accurate baseline scores to help guide the diagnostic process and follow-up in case the patient screens positive for depression.

Leveraging your clinical staff in administering the questionnaire can be quite beneficial in early depression detection. Attached are PHQ-9 forms in both English and Spanish.

If you have any questions, please contact your region's practice outreach manager:

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