

How can organizations identify depressed older adult patients?



Ideas for Practice

Role-play to train staff on ways of identifying patients.

Share examples internally of how you identified depressed patients.



Tip Sheet:

Patient Identification

Strategies

Create multiple avenues for patient identification

- Provide community outreach by hosting special events and distributing flyers.
- Encourage client volunteers/peer advocates to help patients self-identify.
- Create a path for patient to self-refer.

Create a specific workflow for identifying patients

- Strongly consider universal screening.
- Sort through patient database to identify complex population.
- Identify the appropriate screening tool for patients.

Provide education & training to staff

- Educate staff on the signs and symptoms of depression.
- Establish a regular, ongoing process for training including how to administer screening instruments.
- Familiarize staff (e.g., PCPs, MAs, etc.) with their role in the screening process.

Implement identification safety net

- Create a process to track eligible patients and run periodic reports on patients who have fallen through the cracks (i.e., haven't been screened).
- Encourage all staff directly involved with patient care to make direct referrals to the program.