ADDRESSING MEDICATION COMPLEXITY THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED STRATEGIES

Juggling medications can be overwhelming for people with complex needs — individuals who often struggle with low health literacy, unstable housing, isolation, and other unmet issues. This population is often prescribed multiple medications from numerous providers taken on different schedules with no overall provider oversight.

WHAT DOES MEDICATION COMPLEXITY LOOK LIKE?

- 29% of Americans take five or more prescriptions daily
- 30% of elderly take eight or more prescriptions daily
- 119K annual deaths in the U.S. from prescription medication-related issues
- 1 million ED visits and 280K hospitalizations each year from avoidable complications caused by drugs or drug interactions

RISKS OF MEDICATION COMPLEXITY:

- Adverse drug events
- Failure to accomplish treatment goals
- Drug interactions

...ALL OF WHICH CAN LEAD TO WORSE HEALTH, HOSPITALIZATIONS, AND PREMATURE DEATH

MEDICATION COMPLEXITY CAN CAUSE:

/med•i•ca•tion tra•u•ma/ noun

“Medication complexity and lack of coordination that overwhelm the patient, caregiver, and provider, creating fear, confusion, and error, which lead to poor adherence and outcomes.”

- Jim Slater, PharmD, CareOregon

COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT OF MEDICATION COMPLEXITY

Shift from the traditional one-way model of prescribing and dispensing to a patient-centered approach.

IDENTIFY

Identify people at risk for medication complexity through social determinants of health screening tools and risk algorithms/data segmentation.

SIMPLIFY

Simplify and optimize medication use through comprehensive medication management, enhanced discharge planning, and de-prescribing medications.

DEPLOY

Deploy non-traditional workforce strategies, such as community paramedics, specially trained pharmacy technicians, or community health workers.

EMPOWER

Empower patients to take ownership of their medication regimens by incorporating their stories and hopes in designing care goals.

To learn more, read the CHCS report, Opportunities to Enhance Community-Based Medication Management Strategies for People with Complex Health and Social Needs, available at www.chcs.org/med-complexity-report/.