

Improving Medication Adherence Has Proven Key to Better Blood Pressure Control

Burstein Medical Associates of Pinnacle Physicians Group, located in Philadelphia, PA, has made improving blood pressure management among its patients with hypertension a top priority.

The care team at Burstein Medical Associates is led by Dr. William Burstein and also includes two physician assistants, six medical assistants and a practice manager. The practice is an active member of the Pinnacle Physicians Group, Innovative Wellness Alliance (IWA) and the Community Care Collaborative (CCC) accountable care organizations associated with the Holy Redeemer and Doylestown Health Systems in Northeast Philadelphia.



Pictured above are Dr. Burstein (far right), Jamie Crawford, practice manager (to his left), along with other members of the care team.

One of the biggest challenges faced by the practice in regards to blood pressure management is medication adherence.

According to the [Million Hearts® 2022](#) national initiative, high adherence to antihypertensive medication is associated with higher odds of blood pressure control, but non-adherence to cardio protective medications increases a patient's risk of death from 50% to 80%.

In a focused effort to empower patients to take their medications as prescribed, Dr. Burstein and his team implemented a protocol to call patients when their name appears on medication adherence lists that are provided by its' ACOs and other payer reports. "We then schedule patients that have elevated pressures to come in for follow-up visits," shared Dr. Burstein.

Burstein Medical Associates also participates in the Blood Pressure Monitoring Program led by [Quality Insights](#). This program provides the practice with free home blood pressure monitors that it can lend out to patients. "These home blood pressure monitors allow patients to get



Pictured above (from left to right) are Vi Banh, PA, Dr. Burstein, MD, and Leslie Rosenberg, PA

actively involved in tracking their own blood pressure readings on a regular basis which has shown to enhance patient's compliance with their prescribed medications," said Practice Manager Jamie Crawford.

Burstein Medical Associates enlists technology in its mission to achieve a hypertension control of at least 80 percent. "Our team runs our Hypertension Control Rate report under the quality tab in our EHR (electronic health record) to identify outliers on a regular basis and is key to addressing gaps in care in a timely way," said Dr. Burstein. "Our hypertension control rate is also tracked quarterly with Quality Insights, as well as payer dashboards and quarterly reports."

Participating in the Quality Insights Improving Hypertension and Diabetes Control and Prevention initiative for the past two years, led by Practice Transformation Specialist Suzy LoPolito, has contributed to the practice's success. "We found the Hypertension Practice Module and the Hypertension Patient Tip sheet provided by Quality Insights to be very helpful in our work to improve control rates within our practice," said Dr. Burstein.

"The team at Burstein Medical Associates is exceptional," said LoPolito. "A big standout is Dr. Burstein. He is the practice leader and is also a talented and experienced doctor of internal medicine who is dedicated to providing the best possible care to his patients; many of whom suffer from comorbidities and chronic conditions."

LoPolito applauds the Burstein Medical Associates team for the special attention it gives to addressing medication adherence issues and for adopting a team-based patient-centered medical home (PCMH) model. She is also excited about Burstein Medical Associates' participation in the Quality Insights Home Blood Pressure Monitor Program. "Participating in this program allowed Burstein Medical Associates to provide at risk or non-compliant patients with home blood pressure monitors which empowered



Quality Insights Practice Transformation Specialist Suzy LoPolito is seen here holding the Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Champion plaque.

these patients to be partners in their own health. That is so important.”

Burstein Medical Associates has found that consistency is key to hypertension management. “We practice the same protocols year after year and this consistency has been the key to our success,” said Dr. Burstein. And as a reward for these efforts, Burstein Medical Associates received the prestigious honor of being named a 2019 Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Champion!



Dr. Burstein encourages other providers to strive to become a Million Hearts® Champion in 2020. “We were motivated to submit our application for this program to not only share with others what we are doing to improve the health of our patients, but also to recognize our team for all their hard work,” said Dr. Burstein. He also admits he couldn't do any of this without the help of his dedicated office manager, Jamie Crawford, who has been with the practice for over 30 years, even longer than Dr. Burstein.

He encourages other primary care practices to engage in programs like the Quality Insight’s Diabetes and Hypertension Prevention Program and the Blood Pressure Monitoring Program, when offered. He also places a lot of value on the data that is provided to his practice by the ACOs. “This data will help you to target the non-compliant patient so that your team can better control hypertension,” said Dr. Burstein. “It’s well worth it to be recognized for your hard work.”