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AAAHC Studies the Effects of Medication Errors
Urges Action to Address More Than 7 Million Patients
Affected by Preventable Medication Errors

(Deerfield, Ill.) August 21, 2024 — The Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC) announces the release of its updated *Medication Reconciliation Toolkit*. The updated toolkit aims to empower ambulatory health care professionals to combat the high incidence of medication errors in ambulatory care settings. This initiative underscores the critical role of ensuring accurate medication records in preventing adverse drug events and improving patient outcomes.

The updated *Medication Reconciliation Toolkit* raises awareness of the importance of accurately documenting vitamins, nutritional supplements, and over-the-counter drugs across different stages of health care delivery. Providers will understand the challenges associated with medication errors and how to take proactive steps to implement effective reconciliation practices. The toolkit provides forms for a patient's medications in both primary and surgical/procedural settings. Additionally, the resource provides insights on interventions and the impact of electronic health records (EHRs).

Medication errors account for 3.5 million physician office visits and one million emergency room visits per year. Affecting more than seven million patients, preventable medication errors generate nearly \$21 billion in associated health care costs annually¹.

“Medication errors pose a serious threat to patient safety and health care quality. With the right focus and adherence to best practices, these errors are preventable. We urge ambulatory organizations to leverage the wealth of resources available to assess and enhance their medication reconciliation practices,” said Noel Adachi, MBA, president and CEO of AAAHC. “Aligned with our commitment to *1095 Strong, quality every day*, AAAHC offers a comprehensive portfolio of tools, including toolkits, benchmarking studies, e-learning modules, and the latest *AAAHC Quality Roadmap*, to guide organizations in their ongoing quality improvement endeavors.”

Accurate medication lists and open communication enable health care teams to meet patient-specific needs and reduce the risk of adverse drug events. This proactive approach not only enhances patient safety but also builds trust and transparency between patients and health care

providers. Through these efforts, health care organizations can improve overall patient outcomes and promote a culture of safety and accountability within their teams.¹

“Effective medication reconciliation is pivotal in safeguarding patient well-being and reducing health care costs. By ensuring accurate documentation and fostering communication between providers and patients, we can substantially reduce the risks of preventable reactions and hospital admissions,” said Julie Lynch, director of the Institute for Quality Improvement at AAAHC. “Our focus is to provide comprehensive resources and guidance to empower organizations in their efforts to ensure proper medication reconciliation.”

AAAHC Ambulatory Accreditation is recognized nationally as a symbol of quality. For 45 years, AAAHC has provided facilities with relevant Standards and education for the improvement of the patient care environment.

The *Medication Reconciliation Toolkit* and additional resources can be accessed online at <https://www.aaahc.org/MedRecToolkit>.

¹ da Silva BA, Krishnamurthy M. The alarming reality of medication error: A patient case and review of Pennsylvania and National data. *J Community Hosp Intern Med Perspect*. 2016 Sep 7;6(4):31758. doi: 10.3402/jchimp.v6.31758. PMID: 27609720; PMCID: PMC5016741. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27609720/>

About AAAHC

Founded in 1979, AAAHC is the leader in ambulatory health care accreditation, with more than 6,700 organizations accredited. We accredit a wide range of outpatient settings, including ambulatory surgery centers, office-based surgery facilities, endoscopy centers, student health centers, medical and dental group practices, community health centers, worksite health clinics, retail clinics, and Indian/Tribal health centers, among others.

AAAHC advocates for the provision of high-quality health care through the development and adoption of nationally recognized standards. We provide a valuable survey experience founded on a peer-based, educational approach to onsite review. The AAAHC Certificate of Accreditation and specialized programs including Advanced Orthopaedic Certification and Patient-Centered Medical Home Certification demonstrate an organization’s commitment to providing safe, high-quality services to its patients—every day of the 1,095-day accreditation cycle. AAAHC Accreditation and Certification Programs are recognized by third-party payors, medical professional associations, liability insurance companies, state and federal agencies, and the public. For more information on AAAHC, please visit www.aaahc.org.