

# ***Teaching and Learning to Care:*** **Training for Caregivers in *Long Term Care***

## ***TLC for LTC***

### **Module Three**



### **When Wrong Things Happen with Medications: Risk and Prevention - The Role of the Medication Team in Preventing and Managing Problems with Medications**

*by*

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## Introduction

Older adults, particularly nursing home residents, are especially vulnerable to Adverse Drug Events (ADEs) due to the number of drugs prescribed for them, prolonged use of medications or inappropriate prescribing practices. *An ADE can be defined as an injury resulting from the use of a drug and includes any type of medication error.* The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) differentiate between adverse drug reactions, unexpected responses to a medication, and medication errors, which are mistakes in the prescription or administration of medications. Both will be addressed in this module as ADEs.

Medication use in long term care settings is highly regulated, a practice that started with the landmark Nursing Home Reform act of 1987. Many updates and revisions have been made to those initial regulations, based on research on the specific problems that older adults may experience with medications. Licensed nurses who work with older adults must take the time to remain up-to-date on the evolving information about medicating older people.

A team approach is very useful in reducing medication errors and optimizing drug-prescribing practices. Such a team includes at the core nurses, physicians, and consulting pharmacist, and is enhanced by dietician, speech-language, occupational and physical therapists as well as nursing assistant, recreational, music, social work and chaplaincy staff.

This module will review:

1. Conditions leading to ADEs in nursing homes and other long term care settings.
2. Optimal drug prescribing practices for older adults.
3. Roles of various health care professionals and caregivers in medication management.
4. A quality improvement approach to preventing ADEs.



### ***Why this Module?***

Older adults, particularly nursing home residents, are especially vulnerable to Adverse Drug Events (ADEs) due to the number of drugs prescribed for them, prolonged use of medications or inappropriate prescribing practices. *An ADE can be defined as an injury resulting from the use of a drug and includes any type of medication error.* Both adverse drug reactions, unexpected responses to a medication, and medication errors, which are mistakes in the prescription or administration of medications, will be addressed in this module as ADEs.

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### ***What is the content?***

Key content for you to teach in this module includes:

- Frequency and types of ADEs in older persons
- Conditions associated with ADEs in care facilities and settings.
- Best drug prescribing practices for older adults.
- Roles of various health care professionals and caregivers in medication management.
- How quality improvement approaches can help prevent, recognize and manage ADEs.

