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Medication help could curb readmissions: study

By [Ashok Selvam](#)

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Having a registered nurse oversee medication while transitioning to hospital discharge helps patients organize their medicines, says a study conducted at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore.

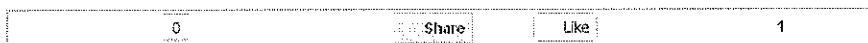
That, in turn, could reduce readmission rates, according to the research presented in the current issue of the *Journal of Nursing Care Quality*.

The pilot study focused on having an RN either call a patient on the phone for a follow-up or conduct a home visit. The research found more than 62% of medication discrepancies were discovered on a home visit versus a phone follow-up.

The researchers used a hospital-based nurse-pharmacist team that cared for a patient during the transition from hospital to home. That also included visits to the hospital healthcare provider and primary-care provider. The study focused on poor inner-city residents with limited educations.

Nurses called patients within 48 hours of hospital discharge and visited their homes within 14 days after discharge to talk about their medication. Nurses recorded if patients were taking the proper prescribed medication and how they organized medication to reduce confusion. Nurses also observed how often and the methods patients used to take their medicines, and if they were getting refills. Nurses spoke with patient families and tried to coach them on how to encourage the patient to properly take their medicines.

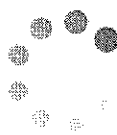
The study, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Interdisciplinary Nursing Quality Research Initiative, implies an impact on Medicare and cites \$26 billion lost over a decade from high readmission rates.



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