

PRESCRIPTION  
FOR  
*health*

**Write It Now**



Prescription for Health is a national program of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation with support from The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

# PRESCRIPTION FOR health

## About Prescription for Health

- National program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
- Focused on 4 leading health risk behaviors: smoking, poor diet, physical inactivity, risky use of alcohol
- Developing effective, practical strategies for promoting healthy behaviors among patients and transforming primary care practice
- Awarded two rounds of research grants to primary care practice based research networks (PBRNs) across the nation
- In round two, 10 PBRNs are studying the effectiveness of comprehensive health behavior counseling strategies for improving patients' behaviors
- Round two projects are using a common set of patient and practice measures, and assessing their strategies for reach, effectiveness, adoption, implementation, and maintenance

## Start making changes today.

Visit [www.prescriptionforhealth.org](http://www.prescriptionforhealth.org) to:

- Learn more about Prescription for Health studies
- Use behavior and practice change tools and resources in your practice
- Collaborate and communicate with Prescription for Health investigators and associates
- Sign up to receive a quarterly newsletter

*“Health behavior counseling can be done in frontline primary care practice.”*



## Changing Patient Behaviors by Changing Primary Care

**How can you improve efforts to reduce patients' risky behaviors?**

- 77% of adults are inactive
- 58% are overweight
- 23% smoke
- 11% engage in risky use of alcohol

**The doctor's office is the most frequent point of contact between patients and health care systems: *14 times as many individuals will visit a physician's office each month as visit a hospital.***

The obstacles to bringing health behavior counseling to primary care practices include lack of:

- Resources
- Tools
- Reimbursement

## Counseling Patients in Real World Settings

A collection of pilot studies in real doctor's offices found that:

- Integrating behavior change into the doctor's office *is possible*
- Innovations may make change *sustainable*

A journal supplement in *Annals of Family Medicine* outlines the pilot studies and the lessons learned including:

- The need for more multifaceted solutions involving new tools, technologies, and care teams
- The need for substantial practice redesign and revised reimbursement systems
- The parallels of addressing chronic care illness and preventive health care in primary care practice
- The value of models and frameworks, such as the 5As, the Chronic Care Model and the RE-AIM framework to guide the implementation of innovations into practice
- The importance and challenges of integrating clinical and community services

*“All primary care practices can do something now to help their patients be healthier.”*



## Reaching Out Beyond the Doctor's Office

“Real world practices that lack the resources to replicate intensive approaches within their offices can still ensure that patients receive high quality counseling by reaching out beyond the office and establishing integrated linkages with information and community resources.”

### Exam Room

- Tailored scripts & recommendations
- Readiness to change assessments
- Brief screening & intervention tools
- Reminders & prompts
- Health behavior prescription pads
- Patient-specific health behavior assessments

- PDA-based screens
- Motivational interviewing
- Wall charts for screening
- PDA-based scripts
- Patient education materials
- Goal setting & action plans

### Practice

- **Patient registries**
- **Group visits**
- **Expanded vital signs**
- **Practice & provider assessments (readiness to change, attitudes, satisfaction, delivery of health behavior counseling)**
- **Physical activity & nutrition interventions for providers & staff**

- Web-based community resource directories
- Health educators & coaches
- Telephone & e-mail follow-up support

### Community

- Referral resources (local walking clubs, behavior change programs/counselors)
- Physical activity & dietary logs
- Pedometers
- On-line health assessments

## Millions of People Can Benefit

“With further research and development in the real world labs of PBRNs and with policy changes particularly to the financing of primary care, improvements in the delivery of care may be achieved that affect not a few, but millions of people, reducing avoidable suffering and premature death.”

*“Increased health behavior counseling in primary care requires substantive practice redesign.”*



To read the journal supplement visit *Annals of Family Medicine*:  
[www.annfammed.org/content/vol3suppl\\_2/index.shtml](http://www.annfammed.org/content/vol3suppl_2/index.shtml)



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