

# Care Giver

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News and Opinion for the California  
Adult Day Health Care Provider

## ADHC – The Center For Medication and Wellness

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About half of the 1.6 billion prescriptions dispensed each year are taken incorrectly. Essentially, patients don't comply with their medication regimens, and don't take the dosage as prescribed. The problem is not limited to patients. Within the last year the Department of Health and Human Services OIG Report and the Quality Chasm Report verified that medication errors are very common for health care practitioners. While there is better documentation for hospital based problems, the magnitude of these problems is thought to be much greater in the ambulatory community. What can be done?



Over 80% of treatment for ambulatory patients is medication therapy. The approach of Disease Management experts is to focus patient care on those areas, which seek to limit preventable events by maximizing patient adherence to prescribed treatments and to health-promoting behaviors. In reality, however, all healthcare practitioners are disease managers, not just specific disease targeted companies. Since the problem is so pervasive

and potentially catastrophic in nature, all health care professionals are obligated to attack the causes of poor compliance, medication errors, and the poor quality of health care delivery.

The obvious first step to attacking these problems is education. Patients must be counseled about how to use their medications. They must be educated about good health maintenance, and trained repetitively in effective disease and accident prevention techniques. The information and tools for teaching patients is readily available at minimal cost, from health care professionals, national associations, the Internet, and through various publications.

Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) Centers are obvious locations to provide educational services for patients. The frequency of contact, and the availability of Nurses, Physicians, and Pharmacists provide an excellent setting for patient training programs. ADHCs can provide a social good while offering value-added programs that improve the overall health of the community. Patients can be provided with educational materials and counseling for their disease(s).

The ADHC can promote compliance for special dietary guidelines, exercise regimens and medications prescribed by their primary care physician.

For example, patients may be confused about the large number of medications that they are receiving. As a result, they may stop taking them, or neglect picking them up because they can't afford them. The result is poor health outcomes. Patients complain of not feeling well, and they don't understand why.

Who sees patients every day? Who provides access in an ambulatory setting to health care professionals? Who provides social and educational opportunities to the elderly everyday?

The ADHC is the obvious choice.