

CPGS RELATED TO MENTAL HEALTH

Application of Course Knowledge: Answer all questions/criteria with explanations and detail.

Describe your assigned client's situation. Why are they presenting to the clinic? What medications are they currently taking?

Carol Kowalczyk is a 71-year-old female with a medical history of Atrial Fibrillation and obesity and no allergies to medication. Carol currently takes atenolol (Tenormin) 25 mg PO daily and semaglutide (Ozempic) 0.5 mg subcutaneously once weekly. The patient presented to the clinic complaining of persistent sadness, hopelessness, anger, and a loss of interest in usual activities for the past six months. Carol states that her husband died ten years ago, and she has been feeling particularly adrift since her daughter moved away last year. Carol states she lives alone and has been lonely and misses her children and grandchildren. Carol reports that she has been going to cognitive behavioral therapy for the past three months but without any significant relief. The practitioner's physical examination indicates that it is unremarkable and considers what type of medication suits the patient.

Assess the applicable clinical practice guideline (CPG) for your assigned client. What treatment is recommended by the CPG for your client's situation?

Based on the American Psychological Association (APA) clinical practice guideline for the treatment of depression in older adults recommends that the initial treatment consist of cognitive behavioral therapy or group life review therapy, with an alternative of combining psychotherapies with second-generation antidepressants such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) are generally preferred due to their better side effect profile. It is required that practitioners prioritize a comprehensive evaluation, which is critical to identify specific factors, such as comorbidities and potential side effects, tailored treatment plans, emphasizing patient-centered care, and sharing decision-making by considering the patient's choice for either psychotherapy or pharmacological therapy.

Discuss your personal professional assessment of the client's situation provided in the scenario. What pharmacological treatment is necessary and why?

Carol is an older adult female who presents to the clinic with subjective and objective findings indicative of depression. My professional assessment of Carol's situation is that she started cognitive behavioral therapy due to experiencing symptoms of depression; however, this therapy did not address her symptoms of depression. Based on the American Psychological Association (APA) clinical practice guideline, SSRIs are the first-line medication for depression in older adults, and SSRIs are generally preferred due to their better side effect profile. Therefore, it is suitable for Carol to start on Escitalopram because it is more generally well-tolerated and has a favorable side effect profile than sertraline. Meanwhile, SSRIs are safer for older adults due to lower risks of causing hyponatremia, minimal cardiovascular effects, and fewer anticholinergic effects, which can be problematic in older adults, leading to issues like confusion and constipation. Clinicians should consider prescribing an antidepressant to older adults with moderate to severe depression, carefully weighing risks, benefits, and drug-drug and drug-