CMR/A Invitation – Disease State Starter Phrases

One of the biggest challenges of completing a Comprehensive Medication Review & Assessment (Level II Service) can be getting patients to schedule an appointment. The following disease state-specific starter phrases can provide a starting point for approaching patients with asthma, diabetes, or heart failure, or older patients at risk of falls, non-adherence, and adverse drug events. You can use these phrases as they are written, or adapt them to fit your style and patient population.

**Asthma**

*Symptoms indicative of poor control:* “From what you have been telling me about your symptoms, it seems like we need to do more to take care of your asthma. A medication check-up would help. That’s where your pharmacist would meet privately with you to talk about all of your prescriptions and over-the-counter medications. This would let us discuss how you use your inhalers. We also can talk about how you have been feeling recently to see what we could do to help you take better care of your asthma.”

*SABA refills indicative of poor control:* “It seems like you have had to use your rescue inhaler (albuterol) a lot. If everything was working well to take care of your asthma, you should not need your rescue inhaler more than two times per week. I’m concerned about your health and would like to talk more with you to see if we can find a way to take better care of your asthma.”

*Patient taking medication potentially inappropriate with asthma:* “I noticed that you are taking a medication that could make your asthma worse. Could we schedule a medication check-up? This is a time when we can talk through your medications and make sure you are taking care of your asthma in the best way possible.”

*Patient frequently refills control medication late:* “I am concerned that we are not doing everything we can to take care of your asthma. I noticed that you don't always pick up your refill for your inhaler regularly. Could we schedule a medication check-up? This is a private time when we could talk about how things are going with your asthma. We also can talk about ways to make sure you can use your medication every day to take care of your asthma in the best way possible.”
**Diabetes**

*High blood pressure without ACE inhibitor or ARB:* “It's important to make sure that patients who have both diabetes and high blood pressure are taking the medications that work the best for them. I would like to schedule a medication check-up with you. We would meet privately to talk about all of your prescriptions and over-the-counter medications to make sure you are taking the right ones. We’ll also talk about how things have been going with your health. When you have high blood pressure and diabetes, it increases your risk for heart attack, stroke, eye problems, and kidney disease. Talking about your medicines in a check-up will help us make sure that your medications are safe for you to use and can work well for your health conditions.”

*Blood glucose not well controlled:* “You said your blood glucose has been high recently. You are on a lot of medications and that can be hard to keep track of. I’d like to schedule a medication check-up. This will give us the time to talk through how things have been going with your diabetes and what concerns you may have. We will make sure your medications are safe and work well to keep your glucose levels where they should be. Improving your blood sugar will help you stay healthy for a long time and keep you out of the hospital.”

**Heart Failure**

*Recent hospitalization for HF exacerbation:* “You said you were recently discharged from the hospital after being admitted because of your heart failure. I would like to schedule a medication check-up appointment in the next few days. We can talk about any changes that were made to your medications and any side effects you may be having or other concerns about the medications you use. We’ll also make sure the drugs you use can be used together safely. If we carefully watch the medications you use, it’s not as likely you’ll have to go back to the hospital.”

*Recent weight fluctuations > 3 lb in one day or > 5 lb in one week:* “It sounds like you've been having a lot of changes in your weight lately. This is likely because of your heart failure. I would like to schedule a medication check-up to discuss your medications. We can work together to identify any concerns with your medication use. We also can look for things we can do to better keep your heart failure under control and keep you out of the hospital.”
Geriatric Syndromes

**Large number of medications – adherence concerns:** “You are taking several medications, and I would like to check in and see how things are going. When you are taking a lot of medications, it’s hard to remember to take all of them and it’s possible you may not be taking them right. A medication check-up can be helpful. That’s a time we would meet privately to talk about how we can make it easier for you to remember to take all your medications at the right time to help you stay well. When we meet, we can also talk about what each of your medications is for and answer any questions that you may have about your medication use.”

**Large number of medications - falls risk:** “People who take a lot of medications can have a greater chance of falling. This could be from one of your medicines or how your medicines affect each other. I would like to schedule a medication check-up with you. We can talk about changes in your medications that can help keep you from falling and make it safer for you to stay in your own home.”

**Patient with a recent fall:** “I understand that you fell recently. I know you are worried that you could fall again and get hurt and have to go to the hospital. Some people are also worried that a fall could keep from being able to live in their own home. Sometimes medications can make a person feel unsteady. I would like to help you keep from falling by scheduling a medication check-up with you. Together we would talk about all of your medications. We would especially talk about any that could make you feel worse or increase the chance you might fall.”

** Appropriateness of medication therapies:** “As we age, our bodies change in ways that can affect how medications work for us. Sometimes we need to change medications so you can get the most benefit from them and don’t have bad side effects. I would like to review your medications with you in a medication check-up. We can talk about possible changes to your medications to keep you safe, or help you stay healthy.”