



***Policy Brief***

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is a cost-effective way to improve quality of life for older adults and critical in preventing fatal consequences such as suicide.

This policy brief suggests expanded coverage under Medicare Advantage Plan Part D for Depression screening at primary healthcare visits for older adults. Medicare Advantage is regulated by Public Law 108-173<sup>7</sup>. Under Title II, the implementation of the Medicare Advantage program is mandated. Furthermore, under Title VI subtitle B, Section 611-614 Medicare

about 40% visit their primary health provider the week before committing suicide<sup>19</sup>

Depression is a cause of disability<sup>20</sup> and is considered one of the leading causes of disability-adjusted life years.<sup>21</sup> Evidence suggests that depression exacerbates chronic illnesses and is related to worse health due to physiological changes and increased risk for experiencing several chronic conditions including obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and engagement in unhealthy lifestyle behaviors such as smoking.<sup>22</sup>

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