

# Analysis of Washington Medicare Claims for Choosing Wisely<sup>®</sup>

Across the state, some healthcare providers seeing Medicare beneficiaries with the four selected diagnoses never treat them using the tests or medications in question, while others order them the majority of the time.

Such broad variability presents an opportunity for improvement.

## Reading the Charts

Each point represents one or more healthcare providers with:

### X-Axis

The indicated number of Washington Medicare Fee-for-Service patients who received care for the selected condition during October 2016 – September 2017. (Rates for providers with 10 or fewer of these patient visits are not displayed in the charts.)

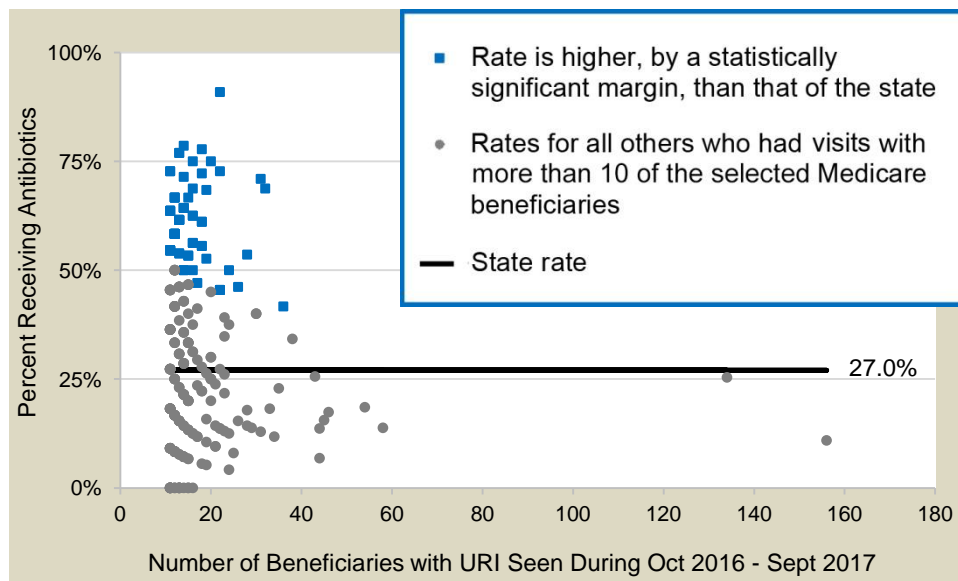
and

### Y-Axis

The percent of those Medicare beneficiaries who received the selected treatment

## Antibiotics for Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)

- The average rate at which providers prescribed antibiotics to their Medicare patients with URI was 27.0%
- Some providers never prescribed antibiotics to these patients, while others did so at rates as high as 91%
- All but two of the providers saw fewer than 60 Medicare patients with URI during the measurement period



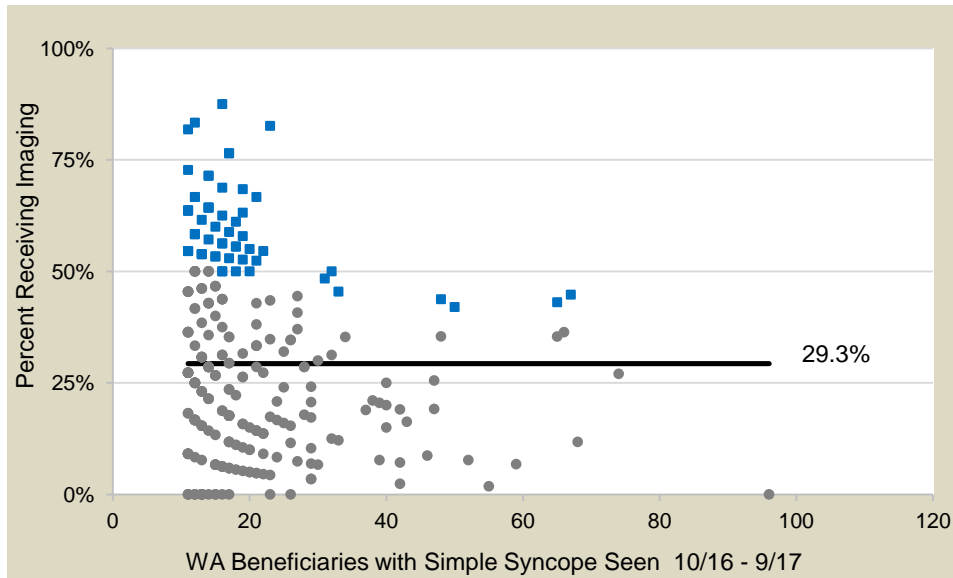
For details regarding data selection and clinical studies related to the four measures outlined here, see [www.Medicare.QualisHealth.org/ChoosingWisely](http://www.Medicare.QualisHealth.org/ChoosingWisely)

Overuse of antibiotics can lead to complications for individual patients as well as the larger public. See clinical guidelines at [www.Medicare.QualisHealth.org/CWguidelines](http://www.Medicare.QualisHealth.org/CWguidelines)

This material was prepared by Qualis Health, the Medicare Quality Innovation Network - Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO) for Idaho and Washington, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. WA-CW-QH-3435-04-18

## Imaging (CT Scan or MRI) for Simple Syncope

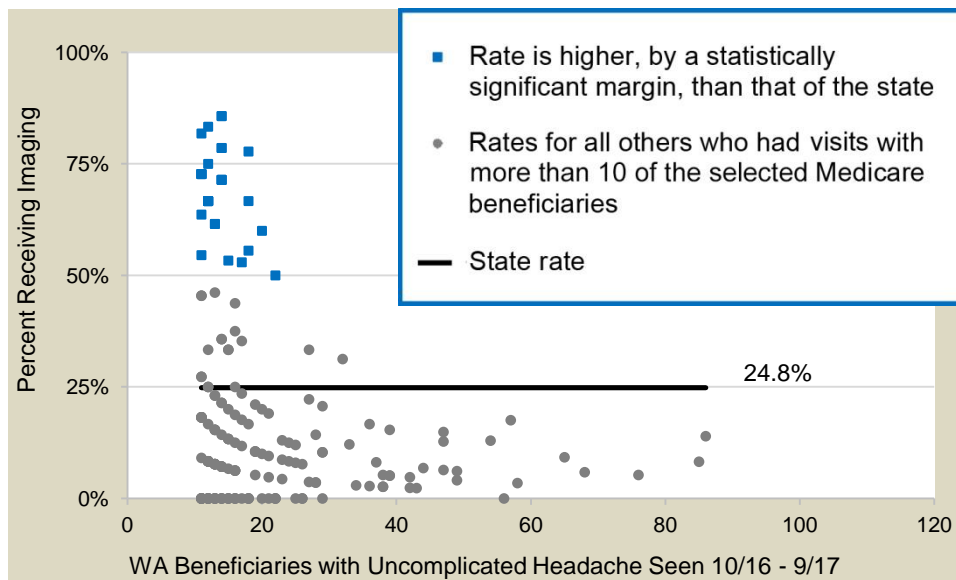
While there may be instances where imaging is required, several organizations (including the American College of Emergency Physicians, American Academy of Neurology, and American College of Physicians) do not recommend it as a standard practice for simple syncope.



- Individual providers' rates ranged from 0% to 88%, with an average of 29.3%
- Unlike the other imaging measure, in the case of simple syncope, even some of the providers with the largest number of patients order imaging at higher-than-average rates.

## Imaging (CT Scan or MRI) for Uncomplicated Headache

Imaging may be warranted in some cases, but providers and patients should be familiar with the American College of Radiology's recommendation against it for most cases of uncomplicated headache.



- The average rate at which providers ordered imaging for their Washington Medicare patients diagnosed with uncomplicated headache was 24.8%
- Individual providers ordered imaging at rates that ranged from 0% to 86%

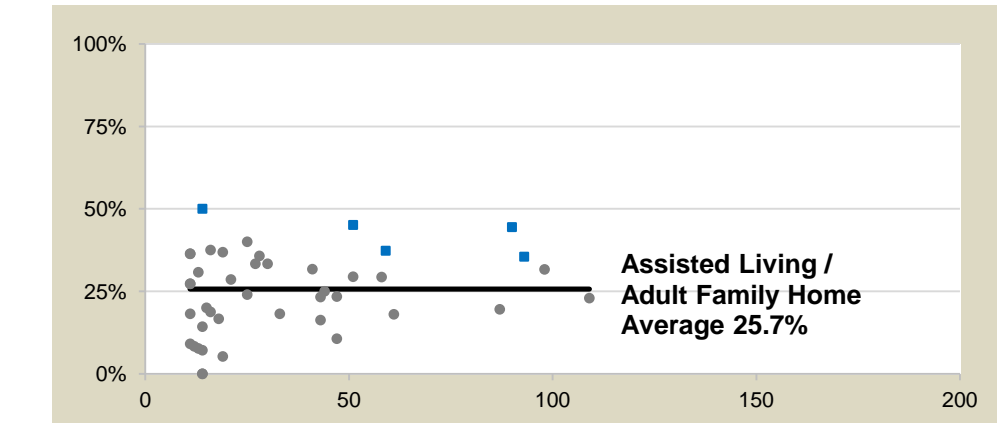
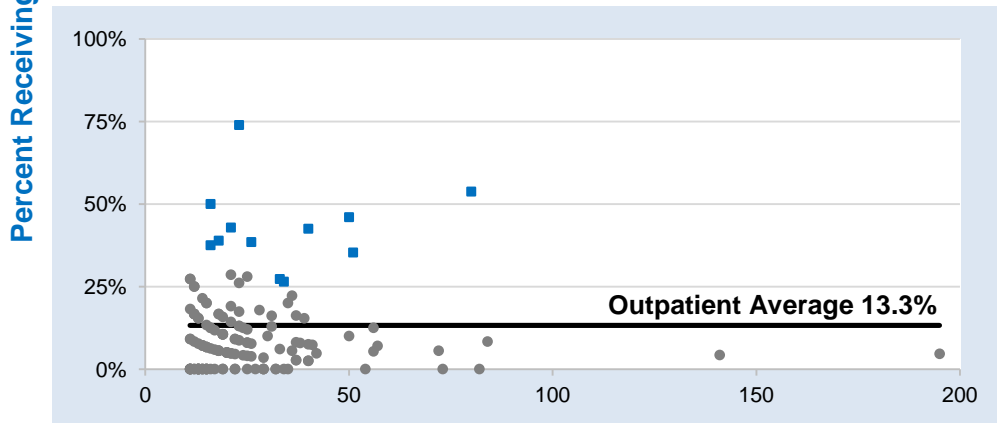
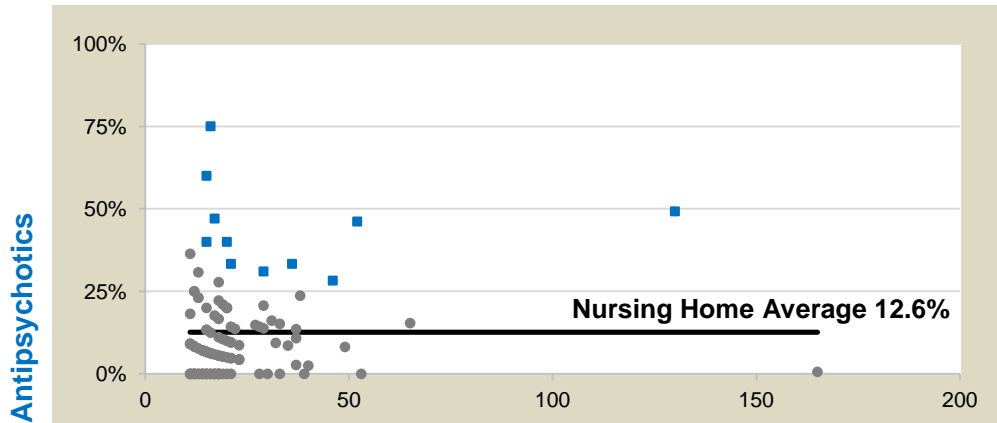
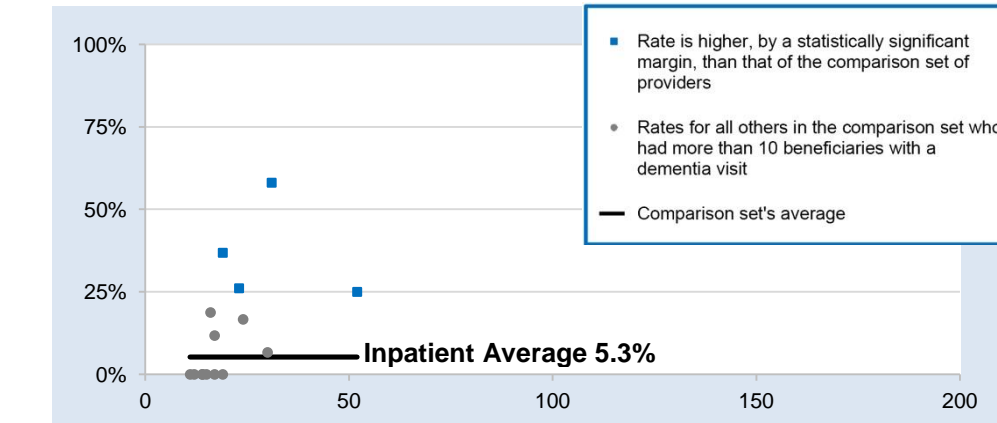
## Antipsychotic prescribing for patients with dementia

We grouped providers into one of four categories depending on which setting most of the dementia-related care was delivered.

Some providers never prescribe antipsychotics to their patients with dementia, while others do so at rates as high as:

- 58% in the inpatient setting
- 75% in nursing homes
- 74% in the outpatient setting
- 50% in the assisted living / adult family home category

Of the 316 providers selected in total for this measure, five saw more than 100 Washington Medicare beneficiaries during October 2016 – September 2017 whose principal reason for the visit was dementia-related. Only one of the providers seeing such a large number of Medicare patients prescribed antipsychotics at a rate higher than the corresponding care setting's average.



**Number of WA Medicare FFS Beneficiaries Seen for Dementia, October 2016 – September 2017**