

## Putting It In Practice: Clinician Guide

### **What is medication reconciliation?**

"Medication reconciliation is a formal process for creating the most complete and accurate list possible of a patient's current medications and comparing the list to those in the patient record or medication orders" (Barnsteiner, 2008, p. 459).

"A study of older adult outpatients who took five or more medications found that 35 percent experienced adverse drug events."  
(Marek & Antle, 2008, p. 499)

### **When does medication reconciliation occur?**

At every patient transition such as SOC, ROC, discharge, after a physician appointment or whenever medications are changed. Medication reconciliation can be time consuming, but it is critically important to prevent medication under/over-dosing, incorrect medications, and omitting medications.

### **The three medication reconciliation steps:**

1. **Verify**—Obtain a complete and accurate list of the patient's current medications including name, dosage, frequency and route.
2. **Validate**—Review the current medications and indicate which are to be continued, doses altered, temporarily held or discontinued. Rationale for changes can be included.
3. **Clarify**—Compare the medication list with medication orders at admission and each transition in care ([Institute for Healthcare Improvement](#)).

**Medication knowledge** is more than the patient comprehending and understanding a medication regimen; it includes patient ability and confidence in taking medications.

**Best Practice = Use Teach-back!**

### **What is teach-back?**

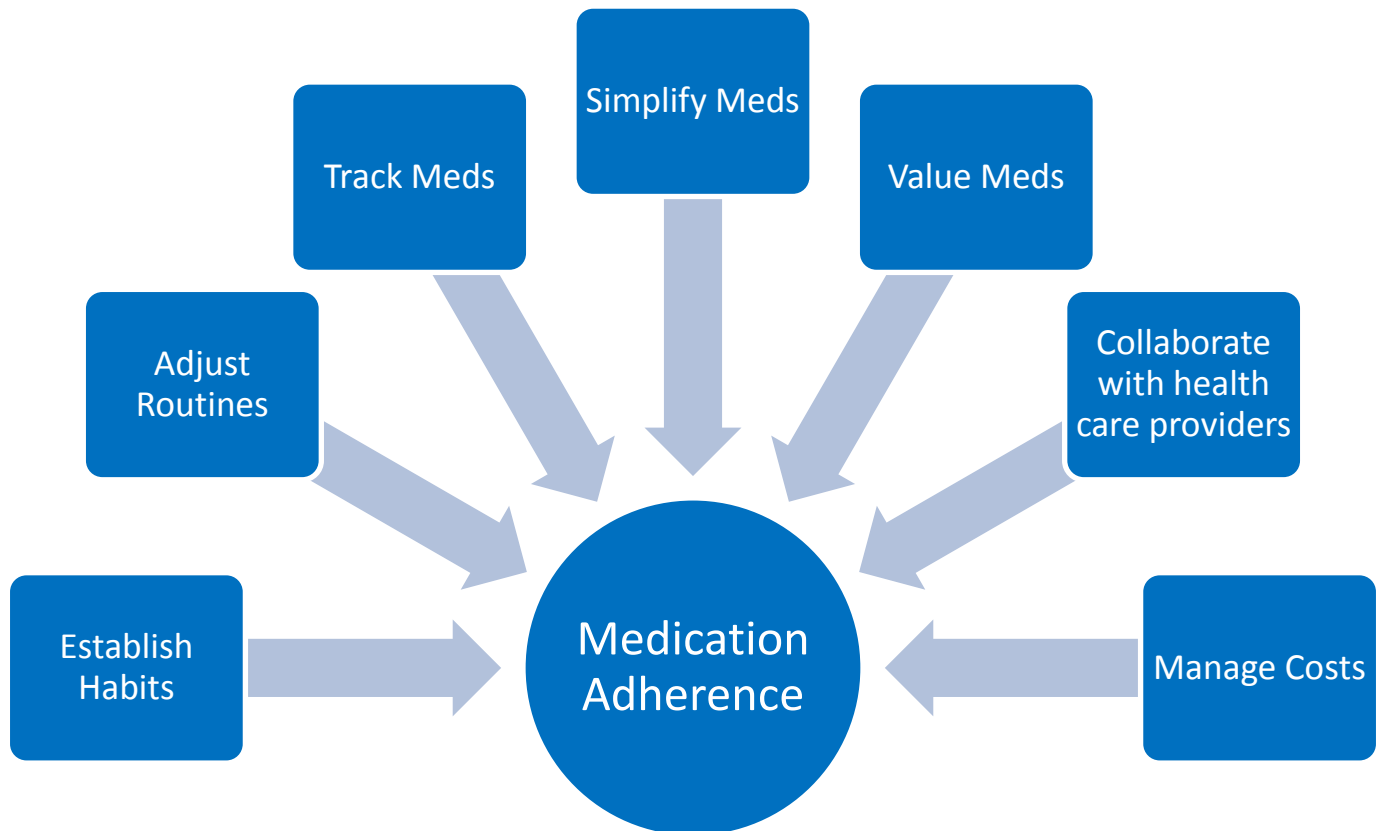
- A technique to make sure you (health care provider) explained information clearly; it is not a test or quiz of patients
- Need to ask a patient (or family member) to explain—in their own words—what they need to know or do, in a caring way
- Clinicians can check for understanding and, if needed, re-explain and check again
- A research-based health literacy intervention that promotes adherence, quality, and patient safety (<http://teachbacktraining.com/>)

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**What is medication adherence?** Medication Adherence "may be defined as the extent to which a patient's or caregiver's medication administration behavior coincides with medical advice." (MacLaughlin, et al. 2005, p. 232).

Patient agreement and head nodding during education does not equal understanding for a number of reasons. There may be multiple issues contributing to non-adherence including inability to pay for the medications and social or cultural barriers. The key is to find out what is at the root of the medication adherence and medication management problem(s) and work with the patient/caregiver to improve adherence.

### Interventions to help the patient with medication adherence



Swanlund, et al. 2008. pp. 241- 243