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Implementation research in general practice – an example. Introducing a tool for systematic assessment of depression in nursing home patients

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Background and Aim: The challenging end point of medical research is sustainable implementation in clinical practice. While sleeping evidence makes no difference, interventions adjusted to and implemented in the everyday context may offer quality care and evidence based practice.

Implementation research takes existing research knowledge as a point of departure, exploring how it can be transformed to action in a real life context. In this project, the introduction of a tool for systematic exploration of mood in nursing home patients serves as an example of implementation research in general practice.

Antidepressant medication is frequently used in nursing homes, even without systematic diagnostics. Cornell Scale for Depression in Dementia (CSDD) is a validated and simple tool for assessment of depression among patients living in nursing homes with or without dementia. The aim of this project is to introduce systematic use of CSDD by doctors and nurses in Norwegian nursing homes, and to explore preconditions and experiences related to implementation.

Method: The process is stepwise, starting with group discussions about potential facilitators and obstructions for the process, as well as piloting the concrete details of the intervention. Qualitative methods are used to study the staff's acceptability for the implementation, as well as the relevance and feasibility of the improvement action.

Results: We intend to adjust and develop a manual for use of CSDD in this context. In this presentation, we shall therefore focus on the first steps of implementation, serving as a starting point for planning.

Conclusions: Introducing systematic use of CSDD to a number of nursing homes, including the study of coverage and fidelity, will be organized with these experiences as the point of departure.