



Making Smarter and Effective Health Care Choices

By Ingrid Larson, Member and Public Relations Director

The Choosing Wisely campaign is part of an international effort by clinicians to reduce unnecessary care by helping health care providers and patients make smarter and more effective choices. Past issues of *Focus* have featured their advice, for example, guidance about complete physicals and common diagnostic tests. Canadian and Saskatchewan clinicians have joined this campaign to improve health care.

The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) is working with Choosing Wisely Canada to support the campaign's measurement and evaluation objectives. CIHI's April 2017 report, *Unnecessary Care in Canada*, explores eight out of more than 200 Choosing Wisely Canada recommendations across several sectors of the health system: primary care, specialist care, emergency care and hospital care. The report notes that:

- Unnecessary care wastes health system resources, increases wait times for patients and can lead to patient harm.
- Canadians have more than 1 million potentially unnecessary medical tests and treatments each year.
- Within those eight selected Choosing Wisely Canada recommendations, up to 30% of patients indicated that they'd had tests, treatments and procedures that were potentially unnecessary.
- There is room to reduce unnecessary care. Substantial variation exists among regions and facilities in terms of the number of unnecessary tests and procedures.

Speak to your health care providers about recommended tests and advice when managing your health conditions. In addition to recommendations there are several patient decision aids, resources and tool kits available through Choosing Wisely including:

- Mayo Clinic's Bone Health Choice Decision Aid
- Antipsychotic Medication – Continue, Adjust, or Stop?
- Depression – Treatment Options
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome – Treatment Options
- College of Family Physicians of Canada Infographic: Rethinking the Annual Physical Exam and Screening Tests
- Dr. Mike Evans Video: Do More Screening Tests Lead to Better Health?
- Bye-Bye PPI – A toolkit for deprescribing proton pump inhibitors in EMR-enabled primary care settings
- Drowsy Without Feeling Lousy – A toolkit for reducing inappropriate use of benzodiazepines and sedative-hypnotics among older adults in primary care
- Less is More With T3/T4: A toolkit for reducing free thyroid hormone testing

The Saskatoon Community Clinic encourages you to review the Choosing Wisely recommendations www.choosingwiselycanada.org. 

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