Improving Early Diagnosis and Intervention of COPD in Primary Care

Kimberly Shelton DNP, MSN, FNP-BC, CDE, Diane Y. John PhD, ARNP, FNP-BC
Sally A. Weiss PhD, RN, CNE, ANEF

Purpose
To educate PCPs about the prevalence of COPD and the importance of early detection in the primary care setting.

Problem
Primary Care Providers lack the knowledge necessary to effectively diagnose COPD in the early stages and don’t fully understand the importance of early diagnosis and interventions that might slow the disease.
PCPs require additional knowledge to effectively diagnose the disease in the early stages and the importance of early diagnosis and interventions to slow disease progression.

Background
• Estimated 15 million Americans affected
• COPD is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality
• Third leading cause of death in the United States
• Economic Burden 2010 estimated cost $53.8 billion
• The only chronic disease increasing yearly
• PCPs are essential to changing the course of this disease
• COPD is often overlooked and undiagnosed in primary care
• Optimal quality of life achieved through effective early diagnosis.

Defining COPD
• Common and preventable disease
• Characterized by persistent airflow limitation
• Increased airway inflammatory response
• Exacerbations and Comorbidities contribute to disease severity
• Usually progressive

Current Practice – COPD
47.3% - managed by primary care
9% - managed by pulmonology
41.1% of - co-managed by primary care and pulmonology
Shortage of pulmonologists restricts patient access

Expected Health Outcomes
• Improved early diagnosis and intervention for the patient who has COPD
• Reduced hospitalizations and re-admissions
• Enhanced medication management
• Optimal quality of life
• Reduction in mortality

References
