AUD IN PRIMARY CARE SESSION 1: AUD 101

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Physician Learning Program

Addiction is defined as a chronic, relapsing brain disease characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use despite harmful consequences. Addiction is considered a brain disease because substances change the brain - they change the structure and how it works.

There are several risk factors for AUD, including psychological, social, and biological.

Negative attitudes of healthcare providers towards patients with alcohol use disorder or other substance use disorders are known to lead to poor communication and diagnostic overshadowing.

"People struggling with addiction are doing the best they can, may be experiencing pain, are capable of recovery, deserve access to treatment, and are worthy of love and belonging"

① Alcohol withdrawal assessment tools

Prediction of Alcohol Withdrawal Severity Scale (PAWSS)
Use in patients ≥18 years old admitted to general floor, with or without history of alcohol abuse. Do not use in patients with active or uncontrolled seizure disorder.
A score <4 indicates an average risk of complicated AWS
A score of ≥4 indicates a high risk of complicated AWS

Severity of alcohol dependence questionnaire (SADQ)
A score of 31 or higher indicates "severe alcohol dependence". A score of 16 -30 indicates "moderate dependence" A score of below 16 usually indicates only a mild physical dependency.

③ Want to learn more?

Earn CME/CE credits while you learn to help your patients with alcohol-related problems

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② Tiers of detoxification based on acuity

- Hospital
- Residential
- Community
- Home detox - AHS home detox protocol
  - Only suitable for specific patients
- Outpatient

④ Find psychosocial resources for your patients

For your patients living in Alberta:

Alberta Live-in Residential Treatment Centres

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Alberta Treatment Centres & Addiction Service Providers

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