

Organizational Changes

The strategy of organizational change according to the AHRQ's report, Closing the Quality Gap¹, includes at least one of the following:

- 1) Disease management or case management
- 2) Team or personnel changes
- 3) Communications, case discussions, and the exchange of treatment information between distant health professionals
- 4) Total Quality Management or Continuous Quality Improvement techniques

Suggestions and Resources for Implementation:

- Assign one healthcare provider in your office to handle all patients with MDD. Many practices have tried this strategy for other chronic diseases, like diabetes. Since one provider is responsible for that specific disease state, keeping up with the latest information and standardizing the management of that disease can become more focused.
- In conjunction with pharmacotherapy, psychotherapy is a first-line defense for depression. Consider connecting with a psychotherapist for referrals and for questions. A search engine for psychotherapists in your area is available online at <http://www.apahelpcenter.org/>.
- For more challenging cases or for questions about specific cases, being connected to a psychiatrist in your area can make asking those questions and making those referrals that much easier.

Strategies for Assisting Patients With Medication Management

- Telephonic nurse case management to track visits and medication compliance
- Potential home visits for patients having difficulty coming into the office
- Web-based and telephone-based reminder systems that help patients remember their medication regimens
- Having behavioral health practitioners on-site during certain hours of the week
- Others that local medical practices may have identified that work well for their patients