



Institute on Aging

Helping Bay Area Seniors Live Independently

**TO REFER A SENIOR TO THE
MEDICATION OVERSIGHT PROJECT**

Call Wendy Withers, LCSW, Project Coordinator, at

(415) 750-4111 X235

An intake form
and medication list will be faxed to you.

Return it by fax to:

(415) 750-3442

We look forward to working with you.

*Partially funded by the San Francisco
Department of Aging and Adult Services.*



**THE
MEDICATION
OVERSIGHT
PROJECT**

The right medications, at the right time



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IOA operates the Friendship Line as part of its Center for Elderly Suicide Prevention. This telephone service reaches out to older adults living alone, and offers emotional support, well-being checks, crisis intervention, and medication reminders.

Our clients have always received reminders about their medication, but we have never been sure about their medication compliance.

That's why the Medication Oversight Project was developed.

Seniors, on average, take more than seven medications a day and may see several doctors. We have designed a system to help seniors adhere to their medication regimen. With the Medication Oversight Project's monitoring, more seniors can continue to live in their homes instead of moving to care facilities.

Enrollment in the Medication Oversight Project begins with an initial home visit by the Project Coordinator and/or a Social Work Intern or Marriage Family Therapist Intern, to obtain basic information and to inventory the prescribed medications.

Assessments on a number of topics are collected from the client, such as their depression level, social support, mental status, etc. This data is reviewed regularly to determine whether our clients are enjoying better health and quality of life, and an increased ability to function as a result of the Medication Oversight Project.

Client prescriptions are transferred to one local pharmacy, which packages the pills into color-coded bubble packs and delivers them monthly to clients for a minimal charge. Every day, the senior breaks open the dated plastic bubbles to take the right medications, at the right time. Dispensing the medications out of one pharmacy reduces the risk of adverse reactions to a particular combination of medications.

The Social Work/Marriage Family Therapist Intern continues to make home visits to evaluate any changes in the client's condition as a result of closer adherence to their medication regimen. Seniors are strongly encouraged to carry their medication lists at all times, and especially for medical appointments.

Note: IOA and its employees and volunteers associated with this program do not dispense prescriptions or give any medication advice.



“Medication mismanagement (defined as the failure to take drugs on time and/or in the correct dosage) is a primary cause of hospitalization and premature institutionalization in the senior population. Estimates show the cost of medication-related problems in the United States exceeds \$75 billion annually.”

—Barbara Hanna and Julie Lehmann
*International Conference on Aging,
Disability and Independence, 2003*

“One in three people over 65 will have some sort of **adverse medication event** that requires a hospital visit. 10–15% of all emergency room visits are related to medication reactions or drug interaction problems in seniors.”

—Andrew Duxbury, MD
*Associate Professor of Geriatrics
at the University of Alabama*

“Good medications in bad combinations can be dangerous and even deadly. Statistically, a person taking eight medications can expect at least one drug interaction problem that will negatively affect his or her health.”

—Wayne K. Anderson, PhD
*Dean of the University at Buffalo
School of Pharmacy*