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Examining Effects of State Policies to Monitor Mental Health Medicines for Children in Foster Care

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Examining Effects of State Policies to Monitor Mental Health Medicines for Children in Foster Care

- ▶ **Antipsychotics** can have **long-term risks**, but help treat conditions like schizophrenia.
- ▶ **Children** may also receive antipsychotics to treat **other conditions**, like attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- ▶ The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has **not approved** antipsychotics for these types of mental health problems.
- ▶ **Children in foster care** get these medicines **more often** than children not in foster care.

LOCATION & POPULATION

- ▶ Children in foster care
- ▶ On Medicaid
- ▶ Four states:
 - Ohio
 - Washington
 - Texas
 - Wisconsin



STUDY DESIGN

*This study looked at how **state policies and programs** affected antipsychotic use for **children in foster care**.*

- ▶ Using health records, the team identified **which medicines** children in foster care received.
- ▶ The team also looked at whether children in Texas and Wisconsin had **blood tests** for antipsychotics side effects.

State/Policy/Program

▶ OHIO

In some counties, doctors got prescribing guidance that included **reducing the use of multiple antipsychotics** at once.

▶ TEXAS

Doctors got **guidance on prescribing** antipsychotics. The guidance also suggested **testing for side effects** of antipsychotics.

▶ WASHINGTON

State requires doctors to get **approval from psychiatrists** to prescribe antipsychotics.

▶ WISCONSIN

In some counties, a policy **improved coordination** of medical and mental health care.

FINDINGS

▶ OHIO

Reduction in use of more than one antipsychotic at a time.



▶ TEXAS

Increase in rate of blood tests for children on antipsychotics. Compared with adopted children, those in foster care with less severe conditions where the FDA does not recommend antipsychotic treatment were less likely to get those prescriptions.



▶ WASHINGTON

Reduction in use of antipsychotic drugs in children, especially those in foster care.



▶ WISCONSIN

Increase in rate of blood tests for safety monitoring for children on antipsychotics.



USED ACRONYMS:

FDA – Food & Drug Administration

ADHD – attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

Key Take-Away

Policymakers can use these results when considering how to improve antipsychotic prescribing for children in foster care.

REFERENCES

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