



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS

F O U N D A T I O N

Abstract of Study Funded with a PBRN Stimulation Grant in 2007

Review of Systems Research: Screening Questions for Depression and Risky Drinking (G0702PB)

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Abstract

The Review of Systems (ROS) is an unstudied component of the medical history. It is, perhaps, the least evaluated component of routine medical care. We aim to develop a validated system by which ROS questions can be rigorously evaluated. We then plan on helping residents to use this methodology to learn about the research process while advancing knowledge. Our first step is to confirm the known validity of dichotomous questions for screening for depression and alcoholism. We will query patients at two groups of residency practices with specific questions whenever a ROS is done as part of a Health Maintenance examination. One set of residency practices will include the specific validated question for alcoholism and the other set will include the specific validated questions for depression. In subsequent follow up, we will ascertain how many patients in the two sets of practices are diagnosed with or treated for both target illnesses. This will allow us to determine if active screening for either illness yields more diagnoses or treatments than usual care ROS screening and if case-finding using these questions approaches the published rates. Once we know that residency practices perform effectively to study questions of known usefulness, we will use the same method to study other ROS questions that have not been previously so studied.