



## spotlight on healthcare

### Working To Improve The Quality Of Healthcare

(NAPSA)—On average, Americans age 65 or older, with two or more chronic diseases, see seven physicians a year. Unfortunately, there may be a communication breakdown between multiple providers, which could land the patient back in the hospital and accounts for \$15 billion in spending in the U.S. healthcare system.

In addition, one of the most critical health risks for patients, especially older Americans, is the aftercare they receive at home or other care settings once they are discharged from the hospital. Meanwhile, 64 percent of patients being discharged from the hospital “report” that no one at the hospital talked to them about managing their care at home. And 45 percent of new prescriptions or prescription changes in the hospital are never documented on outpatient medical records.

The National Transitions of Care Coalition (NTOCC) is a collaboration of 30 diverse organizations representing physicians, pharmacists, nurses, case managers, social workers, academia, patients, employers and quality organizations that are working to help improve the quality of healthcare for patients as they leave one care setting and move to another.

Tools and resources developed by the NTOCC will be piloted and made available to everyone in the healthcare industry, including providers, payers, patients and consumers.



**By coordinating information between your personal physician and other doctors you may see, you can help protect your health.**

NTOCC has come up with recommendations to help patients and caregivers, such as:

- Patients should always carry an updated Personal Medicine List.

—Before leaving the hospital, ask three questions at minimum:

—Do I have an updated Personal Medicine List?

—Whom do I contact with questions?

—When is my next follow-up visit?

- Be sure to have a complete list of all the doctors that saw you while you were in the hospital and who you need to see when you leave.

NTOCC is chaired and coordinated by Case Management Society of America and supported by sanofi-aventis. To learn more, visit [www.ntocc.com](http://www.ntocc.com).