Response to Letter to Editor from Drs. Barrett and Apodaca

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To the Editors:

We would like to thank Drs. Barrett and Apodaca for their letter regarding the essential and critical role that hospitalists can play in the diagnosis and treatment of alcohol use disorders (AUDs) including providing education and initial treatment with medications for AUD. A study published in this journal in 2020 examined utilization of medications for AUD in a large commercially insured population using claims data from 2008 to 2018.¹ This study demonstrated that in a large national sample of commercially insured individuals with an index visit for AUD, only 13.3% filled a prescription for an AUD medication after that visit. This study also identified that 38.4% of index visits for this sample occurred in an inpatient or emergency department setting. We agree with Drs. Barrett and Apodaca that hospitalization is an ideal time for screening, education, and treatment of AUDs and that hospitalists can contribute to improved care of patients with AUD by providing education about the availability of effective medications for AUD, initiating treatment prior to discharge, and providing a warm hand-off to outpatient primary care colleagues. Attention to the identification and treatment of AUD in hospitalized patients can improve care for this population.

Shelly F. Greenfield, MD, MPH^{1,2}
Dawn E. Sugarman, PhD^{1,2}

¹Division of Alcohol, Drugs, and Addiction, McLean Hospital,
Belmont, MA, USA

²Department of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School,
Boston, MA, USA

Corresponding Author: Shelly F. Greenfield, MD, MPH; Division of Alcohol, Drugs, and Addiction, McLean Hospital, Belmont, MA, USA (e-mail: sgreenfield@mclean.harvard.edu).

Declarations:

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that they do not have a conflict of interest.

REFERENCE

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