



Medication Adherence

Office Staff Training



Learning Objectives

The participant will be able to:

- Describe the lifestyle of seniors.
- Identify the challenges of medication adherence.
- Utilize assessment skills to identify and manage medication non-adherence.
- State the reasons for non-adherence.
- Demonstrate solutions to increase the ability for seniors to achieve adherence.



Lifestyle Profile of Seniors

Brief overview of lifestyle:

- Family and friends
- Work/retirement/travel
- Exercise/nutrition
- Social interaction
- Health issues:
 - Physical
 - Cognitive abilities
 - Medications and independence



Medication Adherence

What does it mean to be adherent?

- Taking medications at the right time, the right dose and the right way as the doctor has prescribed

Why is adherence so important?

- Improves patient health
- Keeps patients out of the hospital
- Keeps healthcare costs low
- Maintains patients' optimum health and independence





Most Important Challenge:

**REDUCE THE COMPLEXITY OF
TAKING MEDICATIONS**

Challenges

Directions

Different colors

Pill bottles



Types of medications

Prescriptions

Schedules

Assistance

The most critical element to medication adherence success is overall **patient assessment**:

- Physical strength
- Cognitive abilities
- Health literacy



Physical Strength



Can patients do any or all of the following alone or with assistance?

- Open a container (box or bottle)
- Cut their own food
- Get dressed, take a bath, brush teeth
- Use a cane, walker, wheelchair
- Get to the doctor's office or pharmacy
- Read or hear directions

Cognitive Abilities

Physical strength is important but so is **brain power**, also known as **cognitive abilities**:

- Mental acuity
- Comprehension
- Non-verbal behavior
- Dementia/Alzheimer's



DEFINITION:

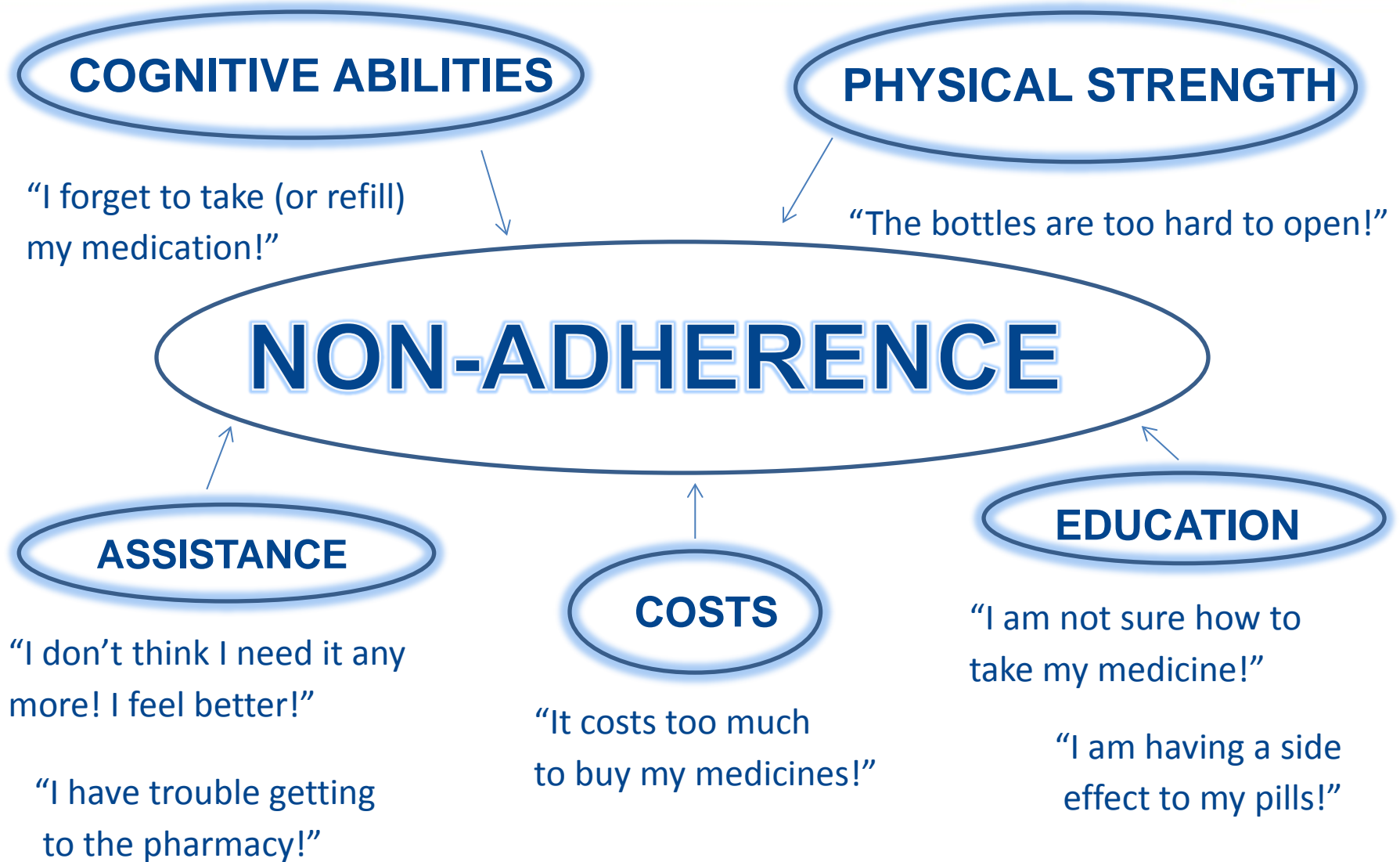
How patients can understand and act on health information

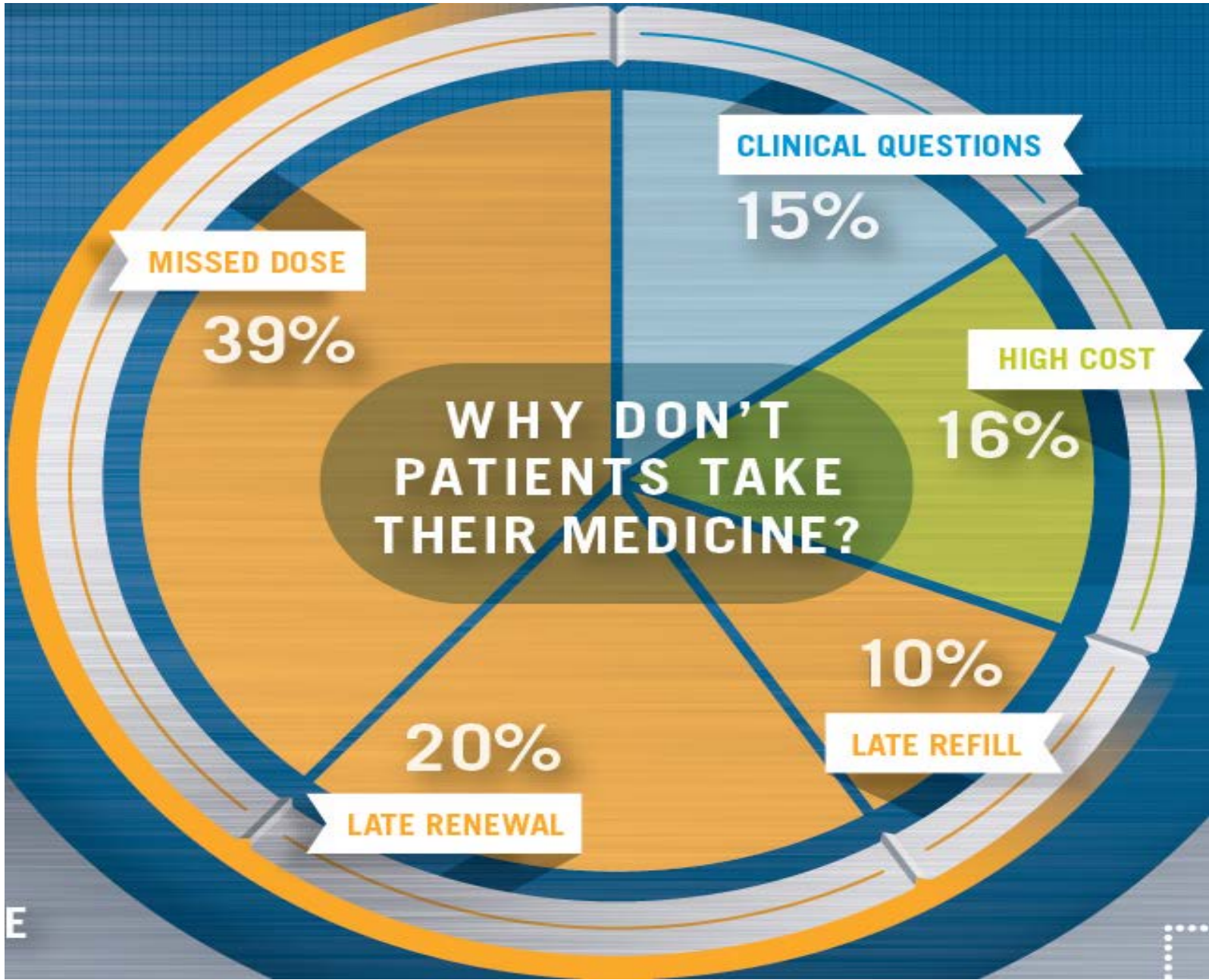
ASSESSMENT:

The Newest Vital Sign (NVS)



The Circle of Non-Adherence





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Solutions to Increase Adherence



- Pill boxes and calendars
- Refill programs
- Buy generics
- Alternative payment plans
- Home delivery
- Synchronization
- Transportation assistance
- New generation: phone alarms, text reminders, calendar updates
- Education
- Involve caretakers

Questions to Ask Patients

- Auto-refill
- Transportation
- Costs of medications
- Remember to take medications
- Medications: pills or liquids?
- Caregiver
- Difficulty swallowing

- Encourage patients to take a list of meds to doctor appointments:
 - Prescribed & OTC medications
 - Vitamins
 - Herbal supplements
 - Teas
 - Medical marijuana
- Medications should be reviewed at least once a year by their PCP. Advise patients to keep an updated medication list with them always.



Warnings to Patients:

- Stop medication when discontinued.
- Follow doctor instructions regarding new medication.
- Use one pharmacy to ensure continuity of medications.
- Ask pharmacist how to dispose of old medications.



To maintain independence and optimal health, patients will:

Properly manage medications to prevent overdosing or under medicating.

Decrease number of ER and hospital visits.

Have reduced stress and anxiety.

Leverage SCAN resources.

Questions

