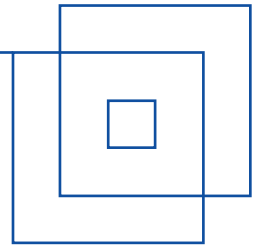


CHANGING THE CONVERSATION



How to Have Conversations With Your Patients About **Long Acting Injectable Antipsychotics**

- R** **RECOGNIZE** life goals
- E** **EXPLAIN** how an LAI antipsychotic supports life goals
- A** **ACKNOWLEDGE** patient concerns
- P** **PROVIDE** accurate information to patients and their families

Use the **REAP MODEL** to assist patients in considering an LAI as a treatment option. REAP uses a shared decision-making model in which you and your patients make decisions together, within the evidence base.

R **RECOGNIZE** life goals

Begin by asking the patient to describe some near-term life goals regarding work, school, family or a relationship—a goal they are working on achieving.

- Explore the patient's life goals
- Listen actively, reflecting the patient's experiences
- Explore delays to goals caused by symptoms
- Develop small, concrete, attainable steps to achieve 1 or 2 goal(s)

Guide the conversation:

- Let's pick a specific, meaningful, achievable goal—something that you can achieve in a few weeks or months. Is there something you are working on?
- Are the times when you made positive steps towards reaching this goal also the times when you were taking the medication?
- Did you notice that the goal was slipping away when you were not on the medication?



EXPLAIN how an LAI antipsychotic supports life goals

Next, see if current symptoms (or their return if the patient has current symptom remission) would impede achieving goals.

- Talk about current treatment (good/bad) and its relationship to goals
- Explore links between the use of long acting treatments and achieving goals
- Elicit support of family/caregivers

Guide the conversation:

- It sounds to me like this goal is really important to you. Would you want to consider a more consistent way to use the medication to see if it led to more consistent progress toward your goal?
- You have taken this medication in pill form and many people have found that it is a challenge to be consistent with taking the pills. There is another way to take the medication. You come to the clinic for an injection that provides you with medication for weeks to several months. You would no longer need to think about taking the medication each day.
- Medication levels are more consistent with the long acting medications, providing the benefits you have experienced at different times. Does that sound helpful... to think about it less and get the benefits more consistently?
- Many people who take oral medications find it hard to keep track of what dose of medication they are prescribed. Long acting formulations eliminate any confusion about the dose of medication being taken. The nurse and I make sure that the dose is correct and you don't have to worry about that.



ACKNOWLEDGE patient concerns

Now, it is important to explore the patient's concerns.

- Explore the advantages and disadvantages of long acting treatment from the patient's perspective
- The perspective of family members may be important – for example, they may be relieved to no longer have to worry about the patients' adherence

Guide the conversation:

This decision about long acting medications is one that we will make together, along with your family. I am sure you have questions and concerns. What questions can I answer for you?

- Will there be more frequent appointments?

Guide the conversation, continued:

That depends upon the medication chosen. Some medications require an injection once every two weeks, others once a month or up to once every 3 months.

- Will the injection hurt?

Some people experience a little soreness for a day a two. There is very little pain for most people.

- Will the conversion from an oral to an LAI medication be difficult?

The conversion for most people goes very smoothly. Some long acting medications require that you take the oral medications during the time that you start the long acting medication. Other long acting medications do not require that you take the oral medications while you start the long acting medication. We will discuss what is required after we decide upon a particular long acting medication to consider.

- Will I be unable to stop the medication when a severe side effect occurs?

Before you start a long acting medication, we make sure that you have tried the oral form of the same medication to make sure that you do not have any immediate serious side effects with the medication. Long-term rates of serious side effects are no different among people taking oral versus long acting medications. If you do develop a serious side effect on a long acting medication, we will stop the medication.

- I need an injection therefore I am getting worse, correct?

No, long acting medications are tools that can help people get better and stay well.

- Is there an increase in medication costs (real or perceived)?

Let's set up a meeting with the team who handles insurance coverage.



PROVIDE accurate information to patients & families

Finally, describe the process for transitioning to an LAI medication.

- Explain who will administer the LAI and how this is done
- Listen for negative perceptions of injections, create understandable context (flu shot, vaccinations)
- Explore any potential side effects or negative experiences and assure the patient that you will address their concerns immediately
- Identify the other aspects of the treatment plan that may help the patient achieve goals (supported employment/education, job training, therapy, etc.)
- Reassess or reaffirm goals

Guide the conversation:

- *Let me take you through the process. It is very similar to getting a flu shot or a vaccination.*
- *Many patients have found that this method of treatment has led to reaching their goals more quickly.*
- *The injection is only a part of the process. Let's review our total treatment plan.*

Keep these points in mind:

- Long acting formulations are certainly not the preferred choice by all patients
- However, a substantial number do choose long acting formulations, if given proper information
- Our job is to make the information available
- Discuss this option early in treatment, not just when relapse occurs
- If a patient declines long acting formulations when first presented the option, do not assume that this decision will never change
- Just like everyone else, patients and families sometimes change their minds about a treatment

Patient experiences with a long acting injectable antipsychotic:

“ Basically, the pill form wasn't working for me. I thought it [the injection] was a lot better because all I had to do was come into the hospital... and I didn't have to worry about taking the pills myself.”

“ I finally found a medication that works with me.”



Watch [this video](#) to hear from patients who have experienced successful results after trying an LAI antipsychotic.