

Background

- In the past, today's grandparents called the poison center about their children with accidental exposures.
- Now, they are calling for themselves, resulting in what appears to be a paradigm shift for poison center (PC) utilization.
- Older adults are living longer and taking more medications, increasing the potential for adverse reactions and errors.
- Emergency department visits for these adverse drug events are escalating along with healthcare costs.

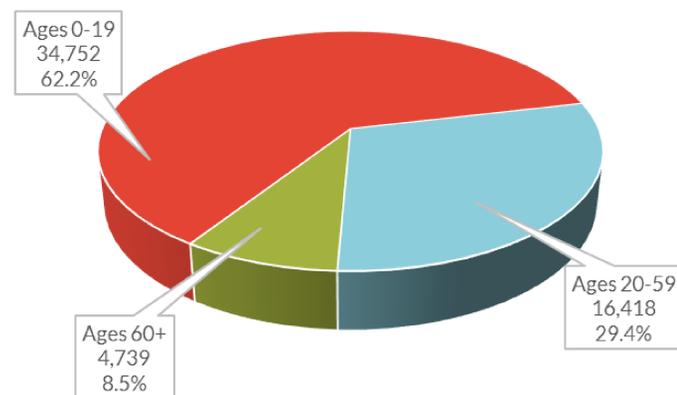
Objective

To describe the trend in utilization patterns of a poison center in adults 60 and older (60+)

Methods

- toxiCALL™ data was reviewed for all human exposure calls to the Washington Poison Center (WAPC) from 1999-2017.
- Call reason, management site with referral patterns, and substance data for 2017 for adults 60+ were analyzed.

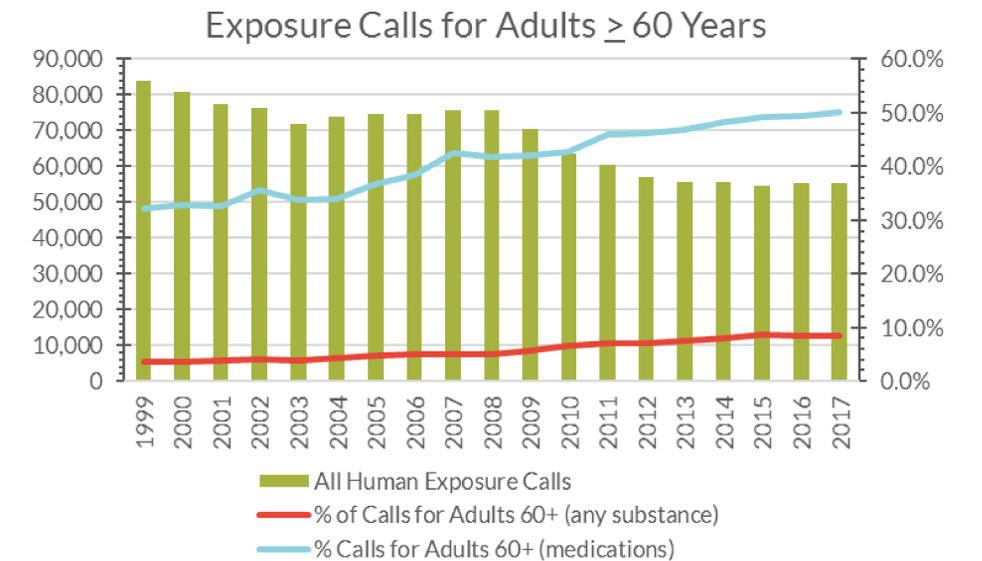
Calls to WAPC by Patient Age in 2017



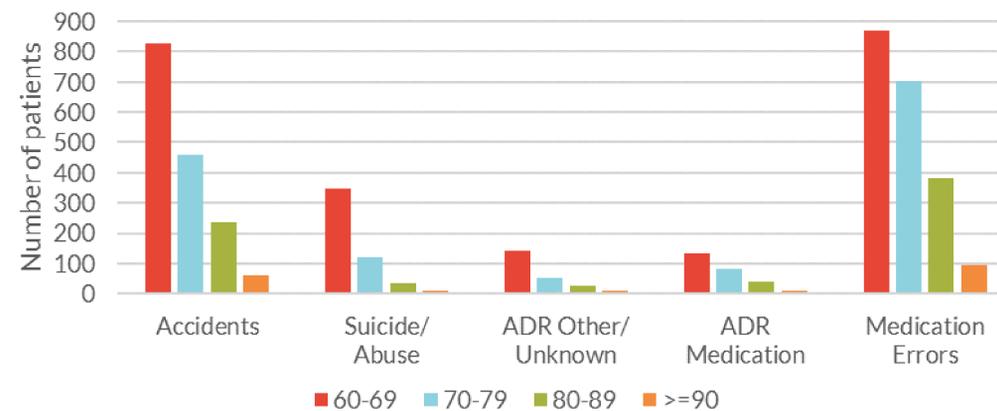
In 2017, 8.5 % of calls to the Poison Center were about Adults 60 and older, however 26% of those calls were medication errors.

Results

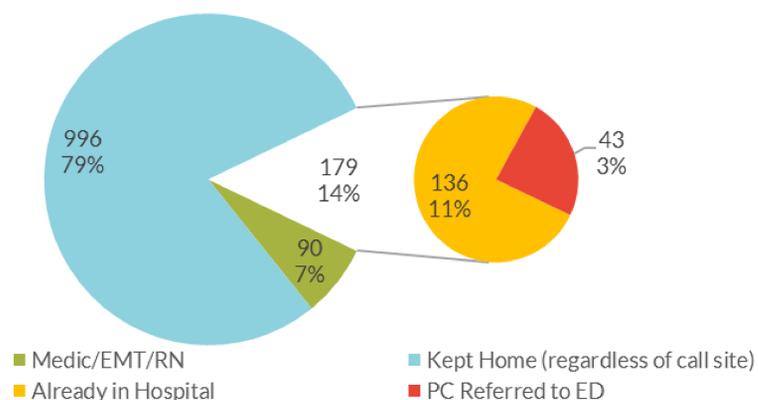
- Human exposure call volume *decreased* 34% from 1999 to 2017
- During the same time, *calls regarding adults 60+ increased* 4.8% (peaking at 8.5% in 2017)
- There was an 18% increase in calls for adults 60+ classified as medication errors or adverse reactions (32% in 1999 to 50% in 2017)
- The top three reasons for medication error calls were double dose (29%), wrong drug (20%), and other type of wrong dose (17%).
- The top substances involved in errors were cardiovascular medications (21%) and insulin (4%), accounting for 25% of total errors.
- Seventy-nine percent of medication errors in adults 60+ were managed at home *regardless* of caller site.
- However, when *the poison center was called first*, 95.3% of medication errors were kept at home.



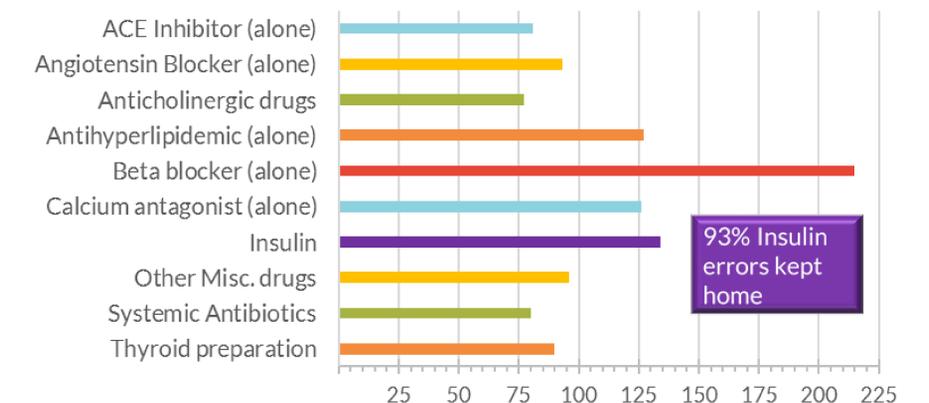
Exposure Reasons in 2017 for Adults ≥ 60 Years



Management Site in 2017 for Medication Errors in Adults > 60 Years



2017 Top 10 Medications Involved in Errors by Adults ≥ 60 Years



Conclusions

- In the last 18 years, medication error calls to the PC have increased in adults 60+, despite overall human exposure calls declining.
- Specific education targeting management strategies that involve poison center utilization is needed in this population.
- It is imperative to invest in the poison center with the changing public health landscape to provide a resource in prevention and management of these errors in adults 60+.