A new study shows that many African-American patients with systolic heart failure may not be getting the recommended drug therapy for their condition. If you are a heart failure patient, how have you worked with your doctor to get the care you need?


Key Points:

1. The implementation of best evidence-based guideline driven therapies remains unacceptably slow in clinical practice. Nowhere is this more evident than in the treatment of those patients with heart failure who have a strong indication for the combination of isosorbide dinitrate and hydralazine.

2. Current data demonstrates improvement made since the initial discovery of efficacy but even more so the significant missed opportunity that would translate into fewer hospitalizations and fewer deaths.

3. Disparate care remains a major impediment in the full implementation of best quality of care; these data demonstrate that a reasonable strategy to improve adherence to guideline directed medical therapy is through a dedicated process of care improvement program as represented by GWTG-HF.

Study Authors:

Dr. Harsh Golwala completed his medical education with top honors at Government Medical College, Surat, India. Thereafter, he moved to United States to complete his residency in internal medicine at University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, Oklahoma city. While at University of Oklahoma, he was awarded with the Best Intern of the class award in 2011, as well as the Best Resident Research award, 2013, for research excellence while maintaining outstanding clinical performance. During his training, Dr. Golwala was also awarded with American Heart Association Young Investigator Database Seed Research grant award for his research with American Heart Association, Get With The Guidelines Registry. To diversify his training, he further decided to pursue clinical training in cardiovascular diseases at University of Louisville, KY. Currently, he is a first year cardiovascular fellow at University of Louisville. His research interests includes racial disparities in management of patients with heart failure, prognostic value of cardiac rehabilitation in patients with heart failure, as well as prognostic value of troponin elevation in patients admitted with diastolic heart failure. He has multiple publications under his name in fields of novel anticoagulants in atrial fibrillation, embolic protection device use and outcomes in patients undergoing saphenous vein graft interventions as well as development and validation of a prognostic risk stratification index for patients with early repolarization on electrocardiogram. In the future, Dr. Golwala aspires to be in academic heart failure and continue his research under the mentorship of Dr. Gregg Fonarow, University of California, Los Angeles, CA as well as Dr. Clyde Yancy, Northwestern University, Chicago, IL in the field of heart failure.
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Clyde W. Yancy, MD, MSc, FACC, FAHA, MACP, currently holds the position of Magerstadt Professor of Medicine and has an Adjunct appointment in the Department of Medical Social Sciences. He is Chief of Cardiology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and serves as Associate Director of the Bluhm Cardiovascular Institute at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago, IL.

He completed his medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine and his post-graduate training in Internal Medicine and Cardiology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas and Parkland Memorial Hospital, where he completed an additional year of advanced heart failure and heart transplantation training.
While at UT Southwestern in Dallas, he ascended to the rank of Professor of Medicine and Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs and held the Carl Westcott Distinguished Chair in Medical Research. He served as Medical Director for Baylor Heart and Vascular Institute and Chief of Cardiothoracic Transplantation for Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas.

His clinical and research interests are in heart failure, hypertension, heart transplantation, prevention, quality of care and health care disparities. He has authored or co-authored over 300 peer reviewed papers and has participated in or directed over 30 multicenter clinical trials. He currently serves on several DSMB committees and is an external advisor for a number of ongoing NHLBI clinical trials.

Dr. Yancy served as past-president of the American Heart Association in 2009-2010 and served on the executive committee for the Heart Failure Society of America as well as on the guidelines task force for the American College of Cardiology. Currently, he serves as Chair of the 2013 ACC/AHA Heart Failure Guidelines Committee. He is co-founder and immediate past chair of CREDO, [the Coalition to Reduce Disparities in Cardiovascular Disease] initiative for the American College of Cardiology. He is chair of the Food and Drug Administration's cardiovascular device panel and former member of several NIH and AHRQ study sections. He serves on the NIH advisory committee to the Director and the Scientific Management Review Board and is a member of the Health Science Policy Committee for the National Institute of Medicine. He serves on the editorial boards of Circulation, Circulation Heart Failure and Circulation Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes; he also serves on multiple editorial boards.

He is the recipient of a number of teaching awards and “best doctor” citations and several professional awards, including the American Heart Association’s National Physician of the Year award, 2003; the Charles Richard Drew Award, National Minority Quality Forum, 2009 for the work he has done addressing disparate care; and the American Heart Association’s Distinguished National Leadership Award, 2009-2010. He was recently recognized by the Metropolitan Board of the Chicago Urban League for his community service. Contact info: cyancy@nmff.org