Identify the veterans experiencing symptoms of mental illness for the first time after COVID-19 diagnosis.

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Abstract
There has been a general increase in psychiatric symptoms since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Literature that has been published since the start of the pandemic has indicated that there is an increased risk of depression, insomnia, altered mental status, new-onset psychosis, neurocognitive syndrome, and anxiety. The military veteran population is at higher risk for psychiatric illness than the general population, and should be screened accordingly. This quality improvement project was developed in collaboration with the mental health clinic at an urban medical center in the Midwest to identify new symptoms of mental illness after COVID-19 diagnosis utilizing the Plan-Do-Study-Act model. Veterans who had been diagnosed with COVID-19 and did not have a previously diagnosed mental health illness were screened via telephone for depression, anxiety, psychosis, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and dementia utilizing the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9), Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7), Early Detection Primary Care Checklist (PCCL), PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5) and Telephone Mini-Mental State Examination. A 6% positivity rate for symptoms of new onset mental illness was found in a sample size of 50. This number is smaller than what is being described in the general population; however, this study was limited to veterans without a previous history of mental illness. Veterans are a vulnerable population that may benefit from increased screening.

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