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## A Protocol for Improving Early Recognition and Treatment of Bipolar Disorder

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**A Protocol for Improving Early Recognition and Treatment of Bipolar Disorder**

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### **Abstract**

In bipolar disorder, patients present to a clinician during depressive episodes often leading to a misdiagnosis. In turn, this could lead to inappropriate treatment. This failure to diagnose could be attributed to lack of use of validated screening tools and deviation from clinical guidelines. The purpose of this quality improvement project was to develop a protocol that will help improve early recognition and treatment of bipolar disorder by using the Mood Disorder Questionnaire. A training program was developed to increase knowledge on the proper use of the Mood Disorder Questionnaire (MDQ) and the Quality-of-Life Enjoyment and Satisfaction Questionnaire-Short Form (Q-LES-Q-SF). A protocol was then developed to increase utilization of the MDQ on all patients presenting with symptoms of depression and bipolar disorder at the initial visit. The Q-LES-Q-SF was completed at baseline with subsequent retest in two and four weeks respectively once treatment was initiated. Paired t-tests were conducted for significant differences from pre-test and post-test. A p-value of less than 0.05 indicated significant differences.

*Keywords:* delay, bipolar disorder, mood disorder questionnaire, depression, outcome, diagnosis.