

Sept 15, 2006

Oregon Pain Management Commission Joint Statement on Pain Management

This statement is intended to join Oregon Healthcare Boards, professionals and interested parties in a commitment to improve the pain management services of all Oregon citizens. Towards this end, the undersigned groups issue the following joint statement:

Inadequate pain relief is a serious public health problem in the United States. Estimates of Americans suffering from chronic pain range from 20%-30% of the population. The physical, psychological, emotional and behavioral effects of under treated pain are serious and wide-ranging. Pain continues to be under-treated. This causes unnecessary suffering and reduced function and quality of life in people with pain as well as increased healthcare utilization and lost workforce productivity.

Several reasons have been identified as barriers to effective pain treatment including: lack of knowledge of healthcare standards and guidelines, lack of reimbursement for multidisciplinary pain care, fear of sanctions by regulatory boards or law enforcement agencies, lack of familiarity of regulatory agencies and misunderstanding of addiction, tolerance and physical dependence.

To effectively assist patients with the effective management of pain, all Oregon healthcare professionals should, within their scope of practice:

- Routinely assess all patients for pain. All pain should be evaluated with a complete history and physical with laboratory and diagnostic tests when indicated
- Work with a multidisciplinary team to develop and implement a comprehensive treatment plan utilizing appropriate pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions for treatment of pain and suffering
- Regularly re-evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment plan and adjust as needed
- Document the complete assessment and plan of care in a clear, consistent and accurate manner
- Treat side effects
- Be mindful of the risks of addiction and diversion of controlled substances and minimize risks using an opioid treatment plan. Recognize that people with chemical dependency also deserve to have pain effectively treated and that opioids may be a part of treatment
- Refer and consult with specialists as necessary
- Comply with all state and federal laws and encourage changes to promote improved pain management

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A licensed practitioner involved in the care of a person in pain should not fear disciplinary action from their respective licensing board for prescribing or dispensing controlled substances, including opioid analgesics, for a legitimate medical purpose as defined by the State of Oregon, based on accepted scientific knowledge and sound clinical judgment.

All Oregon practitioners are encouraged to increase their knowledge of current guidelines and standards for the treatment of pain, develop effective strategies for delivering effective care to patients suffering from pain and actively participate in the healthcare team providing expertise to the patient. By working in a team, optimal care can be provided while striving to reduce the potential for drug abuse. Detailed and complete documentation of the patient's assessment and treatment response provides the foundation for optimal patient care.

The Pain Management Commission's Joint Statement on Pain Management is supported by the following licensing boards and professional organizations:

Board of Chiropractic Examiners; Board of Psychologist Examiners; Board of Medical Examiners; Board of Nursing; Physical Therapist Licensing Board; Occupational Therapy Licensing Board; Board of Naturopathic Examiners; Board of Dentistry; Board of Pharmacy and Board of Medical Examiners-Acupuncture Program.

Others endorsing the statement are the Oregon Acupuncture Association; Oregon Psychological Association; Oregon State Pharmacy Association; Pain Society of Oregon; Oregon Hospice Association; Leukemia and Lymphoma Society; Oregon Academy of Family Physicians; Oregon Medical Directors Association; Oregon Geriatrics Society; Oregon Society of Physician Assistants; Oregon Health Care Association; and the Oregon Alliance of Senior and Health Services.