

Staten Island University Hospital

**Annual Physician/Practitioner
Orientation & Mandatory Training
Program**

Pain Management Educational Tool

STATEN ISLAND UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
EDUCATIONAL TOOL
FOR
LICENSED INDEPENDENT PRACTITIONERS
ON
ASSESSING AND MANAGING PAIN

Pain management is a significant issue in health care today. Estimates of Americans experiencing pain, range from 50-75 million persons annually. Thirty to fifty percent of patients undergoing cancer treatment experience pain. The effects of unmanaged pain are serious and wide-ranging and, yet, pain is widely under-treated. Untreated or inadequately treated pain impacts patients' quality of life and increases health care costs. Factors cited in the under-treatment of pain include concerns about causing addiction or tolerance; inadequate knowledge of controlled substances and pain management; fear of scrutiny and discipline by regulatory agencies; inadequate assessment; and patient reluctance to report pain or to take pain medications

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) guidelines on pain management state, "Patients have the right to appropriate assessment and management of pain." It is, therefore, incumbent upon our physicians, nurses and pharmacists to work cooperatively and effectively to address the dimensions of pain and to provide maximum pain relief with minimal side effects.

To effectively assist patients in the management of pain, health care professionals should, within their scope of practice:

- Consistently and thoroughly assess all patients for pain. If pain is reported, the pain should be evaluated with a complete history and physical with laboratory and diagnostic testing, if indicated;
- Work collaboratively in a multi-disciplinary approach to develop and implement an individualized, written treatment plan utilizing pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic interventions with specific objectives for the patient;
- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment plan, using a consistent, developmentally appropriate, standardized pain scale, and make adjustments as needed;
- Document all aspects of pain assessment and care in a timely, clear, consistent, complete and accurate manner;
- Anticipate and effectively manage side effects of pain medications;
- Provide adequate and culturally appropriate information to patients and family members or caregivers to support patients in making informed decisions and participate in the management of their pain;
- Be aware of the risks of diversion and abuse of controlled substances and take appropriate steps to minimize these risks;
- Recognize individuals with chemical dependency may experience pain requiring medications, including opioids, and may require specialized management;
- Consult with, and refer patients to, other providers when appropriate;

FLACC Scale

Category	Scoring		
	0	1	2
Face	No particular expression or smile	Occasional grimace or frown withdrawn, disinterested	Frequent to constant frowning fiss, clenched jaw
Legs	Normal position or relaxed	Uneasy, restless, tense	Kicking or legs drawn up
Activity	Lying quietly, normal position, moves easily	Squirming, shifting back and forth, tense	Arched, rigid, or jerking
Crying	No crying (awake or asleep)	Moans or whimpers occasional complaint	Crying steadily, screams or sobs, frequent complaints
Consolability	Content, relaxed	Reassured by occasional touching, hugging, or being talked to, distractible	Difficult to console or comfort

Each of the five categories (F) Face; (L) Legs; (A) Activity; (C) Crying; (C) Consolability is scored from 0-2, resulting in a total score range of 0 to 10.
 Source: Merkel, 1997.