Navigating Pain Management during the Opioid Epidemic: Focus Group Findings

David Cameron
Oregon Health & Science University
Department of Family Medicine,
Portland, OR

Funding received from AHRQ (5R18HS024227-02)
Overview

- Purpose
- **Current norms and practices**
- Focus group findings
- Conclusions
- RESPOND toolkit
Quick Poll:

Should pharmacists be involved in chronic pain management?

Should pharmacists be involved in pain medication safety?
Corresponding Responsibility

- Cash payment
- Distant prescriber
- High-risk combinations
- Early refills
- Multiple pharmacies
Latest Guidelines for Pharmacists

Corresponding Responsibility

Monitor for Red Flags

Restrict high-risk medications

- Inappropriate quantity
- Early refills
- Multiple pharmacies
Purpose

• Understand the situation from multiple perspectives
• Collect patient stories
• Reduce ambiguity
Focus Groups

Pharmacists: 2 groups of 7-12

Patients: 3 groups of 4-8
Focus Group Findings

PHARMACISTS felt **discomfort** filling **high-risk** prescriptions

PHARMACISTS wanted to **respect the doctor-patient relationship**

PHARMACISTS wanted to **ensure** patient safety

PATIENTS were **concerned** about pharmacists **interfering**

PATIENTS were **concerned** about **delays**

PATIENTS felt **judgment** from healthcare professionals
Pharmacists felt *discomfort* filling *high-risk* opioid prescriptions.
Patients were concerned about pharmacists interfering with their doctor’s treatment plan.
Patients were concerned about delays getting their medications.
Pharmacists wanted to respect the doctor-patient relationship.
Pharmacists wanted to ensure patient safety
Patients felt *judgment* from healthcare professionals and reduced trust in the medical system.
Quick Poll:

Who has experienced stigma or judgment due to chronic pain or taking pain medication?

Who feels they are included in conversations about their pain medications?
Patient Strategies: One Doctor
Patient Strategies: Self-Advocacy
Patient Strategies: Peer Support
Quick Poll:

Who has used one of these strategies?
Conclusions

• Patients should be the central feature in new pain management models
Conclusions

• Improved training for healthcare professionals
Pharmacy PDMP Toolkit Online Course

This program was funded through a grant from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.
Based on Your Feedback...

1. Patients are consulted about medication concerns **before** the pharmacist contacts the doctor and/or cancels a prescription.

2. Conversations about pain medication are **judgment free**, and geared toward safety and health.

3. Pharmacists **ask permission** before offering unsolicited information about pain medication safety
References


Thank you!

- We appreciate the valuable contributions from all patients and pharmacists who participated in this study.

- Thank you, Michelle Marikos, the Moving Through Chronic Pain Community Forum, and the Southern Oregon community for allowing us to share our work.