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A Faculty Development Workshop for Primary Care Preceptors: Helping Your Residents Care for Patients Requesting Opioids for Chronic Pain

Developer: Harvard Medical School/Cambridge Health Alliance (Massachusetts Consortium)

Curriculum resource type: Faculty development workshop

Methods used: Facilitated discussion, case-based problem solving, and role playing

Intended audience: Primary care preceptors of internal medicine and family medicine resident physicians

Implementation time: 1½-2 hours

Additional components: Facilitator guide; participant handouts; references

Educational objectives:

- Review basic terminology, epidemiology, and management strategies when considering the use of opioids for patients who are at risk for prescription drug abuse.
- Learn effective communication and interpersonal skills in caring for patients at risk for prescription drug abuse, and help your residents do the same.
- Explore personal biases and emotional responses toward patients seeking opioids for chronic pain, and help residents do the same.

Evaluation tools: Anonymous written program evaluations (narrative and Likert scale) by workshop participants; observation and feedback by relevant residency program director(s) to session facilitators

Curriculum resource description: This faculty development workshop is designed to provide faculty preceptors in resident physicians' training programs with critical information for appropriate prescribing of opioid analgesics; currently the most effective medications for pain management. This workshop will provide critical information for training physicians in the appropriate prescribing of these medications, recognizing the signs of possible prescription drug abuse, particularly among chronic pain patients, and discussing these issues with their patients. Using a typical resident presentation of an unfolding patient case in a primary care setting, this workshop provides an overview of diagnosis, treatment, and management of patients who are at risk for prescription drug abuse. In addition, it focuses on effective communication and interpersonal skills and explores physician biases and emotional responses to patients seeking medication for chronic pain.

The curriculum uses facilitated discussion, case-based problem solving, and role playing. The primary teaching points are embedded in the facilitator's guide.

Key words: Drug abuse; drug addiction; substance abuse; prescription drug abuse; opioid analgesics; medical school faculty development

