

## Pain Management

Pain management is a substantial public health concern that has significant economic, social, and medical costs. Although pain sometimes is referred to as the “fifth vital sign,” it cannot be quantitatively measured like other vital signs, which can lead to inconsistent treatment approaches and biased treatment decisions. Underprescribing of pain medications can lead to unnecessary patient suffering and impaired function, while overprescribing can lead to abuse, misuse, diversion, dependence, and death. These are some of the reasons that pain management is a critical issue facing healthcare organizations and providers.

The mechanisms and treatment approaches are different for acute pain versus chronic pain, but both require a multidisciplinary approach. Proper pain management largely depends on consistent, accurate pain assessments; qualified, competent, and properly credentialed staff; medication safety measures; and patient education related to pain management and the risks of pain. Healthcare leaders and providers can use this checklist to evaluate risks in relation to their pain management approaches.

	Yes	No
Has your organization conducted a facility-wide assessment of its approach to pain management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization have a pain management committee?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization take a multidisciplinary, team-based approach to pain management that includes representatives from various specialties (e.g., primary care, pain management, addiction medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, nursing, psychology, occupational therapy, pharmacy, etc.) as well as support staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization use evidence-based guidelines developed by specialty organizations and associations as the basis for its pain management approach?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No
Does your organization have written policies and procedures for both acute pain and chronic pain management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do pain management policies and procedures adhere to federal and state drug monitoring regulations specific to pain management and controlled substances?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do pain management policies require clinicians who evaluate and treat pain to conduct thorough medical histories, physical exams, and risk assessments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization have a multimodal approach to pain management that addresses the total person and takes into account biological, psychological, and social factors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization's pain management program include assessment, treatment, communication, education, and follow-up?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do clinicians receive comprehensive pain management education regardless of the area in which they work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does pain management education include information related to pain in special populations, such as women, children, older adults, veterans, racial and ethnic minorities, people who have cancer, people who have sickle cell disease, etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization have detailed policies and procedures related to <a href="#">preventing drug diversion</a> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are physicians and multidisciplinary staff members who specialize in pain management credentialed for specific pain management techniques and treatments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization have an up-to-date procedural sedation policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are physicians and multidisciplinary staff members who are involved in procedural sedation that is given in conjunction with interventional pain management certified in advanced cardiovascular life support?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are patients assessed for indications of <a href="#">obstructive sleep apnea</a> (OSA) before sedation or use of opioid analgesics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the results of OSA assessments consistently documented in patients' health records?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No
Are reversal agents and crash carts immediately available during interventional pain management procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all patients who receive interventional pain management treatment on an outpatient basis given written discharge instructions at a reading level that they can comprehend?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do adverse or unexpected outcomes related to pain management, medication, and treatment trigger peer review?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are incidents and claims analyzed for risk factors related to pain management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are patient complaints about pain management monitored, trended, and reviewed for quality improvement opportunities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your organization monitor and compare patient treatment and outcomes by race, gender, and socioeconomic indicators to identify issues of <a href="#">bias in pain management</a> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For more information and strategies related to pain treatment and prescribing, see MedPro's [Risk Resources: Opioid Prescribing & Pain Management](#).

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