

We need to talk about opioids.....with and without chronic pain

UWS Webinar November 2020

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South West Sydney Local Health District Drug Health Services

For South West Sydney GPs:

‘General Practice Drug and Alcohol Advice and Support Service’

Helpline for all SWS GPs: Monday – Friday (excluding public holidays) 9.30am-5pm

Immediate access to clinical advice and support. Follow-up case conferences and assessments available as well.

0455 079 436



Images and words.....



Tony aged 48...

- You have been seeing Tony, aged 48, for 2 years.
- He lives at home with his wife and 2 children, has no history of any major mental health issues, and has been working as a primary teacher at the local school for the last 7 years.
- He has well controlled hypertension, and is otherwise well, but 3 months ago slipped over and hurt his low back.
- He has been doing active exercises prescribed by his physiotherapist, and has trialled both paracetamol and ibuprofen in therapeutic doses, but finds his pain is still severe.
- There are no 'red flags' indicating any underlying sinister conditions causing the pain. He is struggling to do basic tasks at home like gardening and shopping.
- He asks you if you could prescribe 'something stronger.'

Talking about Tony....

What are 3 aspects of a good framework for management of chronic non-malignant pain?

- Bio-psycho-social
- Active treatments
- Monitor and treat function & life enjoyment as well as pain

Ref:

Understanding Pain Hunter Integrated Pain Service available Oct 2020 at:

http://www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/Pain/Documents/Understanding%20Pain_February%202018.pdf

Effect of Opioid vs Nonopioid Medications on Pain-Related Function in Patients With Chronic Back Pain or Hip or Knee Osteoarthritis Pain The SPACE Randomized Clinical Trial [Erin E. Krebs](#), et al *JAMA*. 2018;319(9):872-882.

PEG tool

https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/257417/PEG_Pain_Screening_Tool.pdf

Brief Pain Inventory (BPI):

https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/212910/Brief_Pain_Inventory_Final.pdf

Talking about Tony....

How would you explain your management framework to Tony?

- Share experiences of these conversations
- Practice your explanation in pairs

Ref: Video on 'Introduction to Pain' Dr Philip Siddall, Pain specialist, available at:
<https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain/for-everyone/introduction-to-pain>

Talking about Tony....

Would you consider prescribing an opioid for Tony?

What factors would you consider?

Ref:
Opioid Risk Assessment Tool

https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/212911/Opioid-Risk-Assessment-Tool.pdf

Talking about Tony....

What potential risks are there from prescription opioids?

Ref:

Penington Institute (2019) Australia's annual overdose report 2019. Melbourne: Penington Institute.

<https://www.penington.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Australias-Annual-Overdose-Report-2019-1.pdf>

Opioid Risk Assessment Tool

https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/212911/Opioid-Risk-Assessment-Tool.pdf

Talking about Tony....

What are some important considerations if trialling an opioid for treatment of chronic non-malignant pain?

Jessica aged 28.....

- You have known Jessica, aged 28 years, for many years.
- She had fractured her right wrist 8 months ago, and was prescribed 'Endone' at the hospital as part of the discharge plan.
- Jessica comes to see you distressed, and tells you she has been seeing other doctors at times for prescriptions.
- She is currently taking between 40mg – 50mg four times a day.
- She swings between asking you for an increased dose of 'Endone,' and telling you that she feels 'out of control' and asking how to stop her 'Endone.'

Talking about Jessica....

What else needs to be assessed with Jessica at this stage?

Ref:

DSM V: Criteria for substance use disorder

Talking about Jessica....

What stage of change is Jessica at, and how can you help her motivation to change?

Ref:

Motivational interviewing video RACGP

<https://www.racgp.org.au/education/professional-development/online-learning/resources-and-webinar-series/clinical-support-resources/motivational-interviewing>

Talking about Jessica....

What options for prescription opioid use can you discuss with Jessica?

Ref:

How to deprescribe and wean opioids in general practice

Pain Management Network, ACI NSW Health

https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain/health-professionals/quick-steps-to-manage-chronic-pain-in-primary-care/how_to_de-prescribe_and_wean_opioids_in_general_practice

Introduction to depot buprenorphine in the treatment of opioid dependent patients RACGP Webinar October 2019

<https://www.racgp.org.au/education/professional-development/online-learning/webinars/drugs-and-alcohol/buprenorphine-in-the-treatment-of-opioid-dependent>

Managing patients who are opioid dependent Part 2 RACGP Webinar Nov 2018

<https://www.racgp.org.au/education/professional-development/online-learning/webinars/drugs-and-alcohol/managing-patients-who-are-opioid-dependent-part-2>

Talking about Jessica....and Tony....

Are there any regulatory considerations around prescribing an opioid in these scenarios?

Ref:

NPS MedicineWise: Opioids: New and amended PBS listings
18th June 2020

https://www.nps.org.au/radar/articles/opioids-new-and-amended-pbs-listings?_cldee=amVubnlqYTk5OUBnbWFpC5jb20%3d&recipientid=contact-0dd410e9e64fe61194540050568a45a5-1b81bf63f5d84d0694e76c381b35a87b&utm_source=ClickDimensions&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=TGA%20Opioids_scoping%20survey&esid=aff75f97-5dcd-ea11-94b4-0050568a45a5

Prescribing a Schedule 8 opioid or benzodiazepine, NSW Health

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pharmaceutical/doctors/Pages/prescribe-s8-opioid.aspx>

A Final Word.....

People with substance use disorders have high rates of undiagnosed and untreated comorbidity.....

- Chronic medical disease e.g. IHD, hypertension, diabetes, renal disease, CAL, BBV.....
- Mental health issues
- Overdose risk

Ref:

Life expectancy of people who are dependent on opioids: A cohort study in New South Wales, Australia

Dan Lewer et al

[Journal of Psychiatric Research](#)

Volume 130, November 2020, Pages 435-440

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0022395620309249?via%3Dihub>

Support for GPs and GP registrars in SWS

This service is aimed at providing support to GPs providing care to patients with AOD and associated issues.

- Available weekdays (excl public holidays)
- Hours of operation 9.30am to 5pm
- Direct access to local consultant drug health clinicians (including medical team)
- Advice on clinical issues related to drug and alcohol use
- Advice on referral pathways
- All enquiries welcome from simple to complex

**Ph for GPs (not patients):
0455 079 436**