Advocacy News

Primary Care Leaders and Pain Experts Join Forces for Third Phase of Educational Summit
Representatives from eight national medical societies will again join forces with the American Academy of Pain Medicine (AAPM) in a unique collaborative effort to improve pain care by targeting frontline healthcare providers. The third meeting of the Primary Care Summit is set for June 20.
Full story...

AAPM Signs Letter Supporting H.R. 293 (The Protect Continuing Physician Education and Patient Care Act, H.R. 293)
AAPM Signs on to a letter to the Honorable Michael Burgess, MD (U.S. Congressman, TX-26) supporting H.R. 293 as it relates to the Physician Payments Sunshine Act (Sunshine Act).
To view letter... To view bill...

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Pain Research in the News
Too Many Migraine Patients Are Getting Opioids and Barbiturates For Their Pain
June 17, 2015 [Source: American Headache Society]
Approximately 20% of patients who visited a headache center reported current use of opioids and/or barbiturates, despite the fact that these drugs can worsen headaches, be ineffective, or carry dependency or withdrawal risks, according to a new study presented this week at the 57th Annual Scientific Meeting of the American Headache Society. Full story...

Potent Approach Shows Promise for Chronic Pain
June 17, 2015 [Source: Boston Children's Hospital]
Non-narcotic treatments for chronic pain that work well in people, not just mice, are sorely needed. Drawing from human pain genetics, an international team led by Boston Children's Hospital demonstrates a way to break the cycle of pain hypersensitivity without the development of addiction, tolerance or side effects. Full story...

Migraine Community Sees Promise in New Class of Drugs; Studies to be Presented at AHS Meeting
June 17, 2015 [Source: American Headache Society]
Migraine researchers and clinicians are growing excited about a new class of drugs called Calcitonin Gene-Related Peptide (CGRP) monoclonal antibodies, which are showing promise in treating high-frequency episodic migraine and chronic migraine. Full story...

Spinal Cord Stimulation for Chronic Pain Led to Decreased Healthcare Costs and Improved Functional Measures
June 10, 2015 [Source: International Neuromodulation Society]
During three years, mean hospitalization costs at the Vancouver Island Health Authority climbed for a set of pain patients before they received spinal cord stimulation to manage their chronic condition. Full story...

UC Study Links Brain Inflammation Triggered by Chronic Pain to Anxiety and Depression
June 9, 2015 [Source: University of California, Irvine]
Brain inflammation caused by chronic nerve pain alters activity in regions that regulate mood and motivation, suggesting for the first time that a direct biophysical link exists between long-term pain and the depression, anxiety and substance abuse seen in more than half of these patients, UC Irvine and UCLA researchers report. Full story...

Weekly Non-invasive Brain Stimulation Provides Long-Term Relief of Post-Stroke Pain
June 8, 2015 [Source: International Neuromodulation Society]
Weekly sessions of non-invasive repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation provided sufficient long-term pain relief in 61 percent of patients with post-stroke pain, and delivered long-term relief for patients who continued for one year, according to a study presented at the International Neuromodulation Society 12th World Congress. Full story...

Lost Posture: Why Some Indigenous Cultures May Not Have Back Pain
June 8, 2015 [Source: NPR]
Full story...

New Data on Botulinum Toxin as Treatment for Nerve Pain
June 5, 2015 [Source: International Anesthesia Research Society (IARS)]
Botulinum toxin could offer an effective new treatment for two forms of
neuropathy—pain caused by different types of nerve injury, according to an experimental study published in Anesthesia & Analgesia. Full story...


Hyperbaric Hope for Fibromyalgia Sufferers June 2, 2015 [Source: Rice University] Women who suffer from fibromyalgia benefit from a treatment regimen in a hyperbaric oxygen chamber, according to researchers at Rice University and institutes in Israel. Full story...

Survey Results Show Few Doctors Are Very Confident Managing Patients on Opioids June 2, 2015 [Source: Boston University School of Medicine] Only a quarter of physicians who prescribe opioids say they are very confident managing the patients they prescribe them to, according to new survey results released by the Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM) and myCME, Haymarket Medical Education's global medical education website. Full story...

Shingles Vaccine Associated with Reduced Risk of Long-Term Pain among Patients June 2, 2015 [Source: Kaiser Permanente] People who received a vaccination for shingles (also known as herpes zoster) but still contracted shingles had a lower risk of developing post-herpetic neuralgia (or PHN), a potentially long lasting and painful complication of the condition. The Kaiser Permanente study was published today in The Journal of Infectious Diseases. Full story...

American Surgery Patients -- More Pain Medication, Yet More Pain May 31, 2015 [Source: ESA (European Society of Anaesthesiology)] Full story...


Migraine Surgery for Teens—Good Results in Initial Experience May 29, 2015 [Source: Wolters Kluwer Health: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins] Full story...

A Better Understanding of Links between Pain and Anxiety Reveals Treatment Opportunities May 27, 2015 [Source: Canadian Association for Neuroscience] Full story...

Study Identifies Brain Regions Activated When Pain Intensity Doesn’t Match Expectation May 27, 2015 [Source: Wake Forest University] Full story...

New Findings about Mechanisms Underlying Chronic Pain Reveal Novel Therapeutic Strategies May 26, 2015 [Source: Canadian Association for Neuroscience] Full story...

Mutated Gene Leads to Insensitivity to Pain with Drastic Consequences May 26, 2015 [Source: Medical University of Vienna, Austria] Full story...

New Study Shows a Plant-Based Vegan Diet Improves Diabetic
AMA/RUC Survey of Interlaminar Epidural Injections

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have requested review and revision of CPT codes for reporting interlaminar epidural injections. If you are randomly selected from the AAPM membership database to participate in an AMA/RUC survey of physician work and you have direct professional knowledge of the service, we ask that you complete the survey. This survey will help our society to assure that relative values will be accurately and fairly presented to CMS during this revision process. Your input is vital to obtain estimates of the time and complexity required in performing these procedures and we appreciate your time and effort.

If you are inappropriately contacted regarding this survey, please notify specialty society staff, Emily Hill, at emily@codingandcompliance.com immediately. For any questions, please contact Emily Hill at the above email address.

Sunshine Act Payment Data to Be Released June 30

June 18, 2015 [Source: AMA Advocacy Update]

Physicians' 2014 financial data under the Physician Payments Sunshine Act, also known as the Open Payments program, will be released to the public June 30. There is still time to review and dispute errors that will be reflected in the next scheduled update of the database. Even though CMS overrode the AMA and other medical associations' calls to delay the release of 2013 payment data in light of all the problems, the AMA was able to head off much of the anticipated interpretation troubles by educating reporters about issues with the data, guiding physicians through the review and dispute process and providing talking points to explain the data to inquiring patients. Full story (scroll down to view)...

New Resource: Pain Medicine Diagnostic Code Mapper

The Pain Medicine Diagnostic Code Mapper has four full pages containing the top reported ICD-9-CM diagnoses codes, mapping them to ICD-10-CM codes for pain medicine. Click here to order...

2015 Illustrated Coding and Billing for Anesthesia/Pain Medicine

This all-in-one resource contains all the coding information you need on one page for anesthesia and pain medicine. For more information...

Now available for purchase on the AAPM Education Portal! Just $99!
ICD-10 Case Studies for Pain Medicine Services Virtual Seminar

Visit the coding for pain section of the website for coding books, on-demand coding seminars and other coding resources.

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AAPM Annual Meeting

AAPM's 2016 Annual Meeting Call for Proposals for Education Sessions is Now Live

Submission deadline extended to June 22, 2015

AAPM is now seeking proposals* for its 32nd Annual Meeting, which will be held February 18-21, 2016 with Pre-meeting activities beginning on February 17-18, in Palm Springs, CA.

To improve the delivery and practice of evidence-based pain care throughout the healthcare continuum, the 2016 Annual Meeting Planning Committee seeks education session submissions designed to improve the evaluation, diagnosis, and multidisciplinary (integrative and interventional) interprofessional treatment for pain disorders, as well as methods of improving the practice of pain medicine in this changing healthcare environment. The 2016 Annual Meeting will place a special emphasis upon pain assessment and management in primary care.

For more details...

* Proposals for AAPM education sessions cannot be initiated by members of industry. Moderators and faculty must not receive support from industry for participation in the proposed submission.

Watch the website in July for the 2016 Call for Scientific Poster Abstracts.

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AAPM Business

Call for Nominations: 2016-2017 Board of Directors and Nominating Committee

Deadline: July 1, 2015

The Academy is now inviting nominations for available 2016-2017 positions on the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee. Nominees should be current, voting members of AAPM who are interested in and qualified for service in a leadership role.

Click here for more information...

Call for 2016 Awards Nominations

Deadline: July 1, 2015

The annual AAPM awards program identifies and celebrates the accomplishments of individuals whose endeavors improve the care of people with pain. Awards are presented at the AAPM Annual Meeting to those who contribute to the field of Pain Medicine in social, political, scientific, or clinical arenas.

Click here for more information...

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Government Agency News
2015 Healthy Aging Summit
July 27-28, 2015, Washington DC
The American College of Preventive Medicine and HHS Office of Disease
Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) will host the 2015 Healthy Aging
Summit, which will specifically highlight the science of healthy aging and
preventive services and identify policy gaps that can be pursued to improve
the quality of life for older adults. A greater understanding of the social,
environmental and emotional factors that influence health in the later years of
life can improve quality of life and reduce health care costs. For more
information...

Exploring Naloxone Uptake and Use – A Public Meeting
July 1-2, 2015, FDA White Oak Campus, Silver Spring, MD
Full story...

Seeking Input from the Community on NIDA’s Scientific Reorganization
June 12, 2015 [Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse]
Full story...
View Federal Register...

HHS Announces New Interactive Training on Safe Opioid Use
May 28, 2015 [Source: HHS]
Full story...

Manchin and Scott Launch Prescription Drug Abuse Caucus
May 22, 2015 [Source: U.S. Senator Joe Manchin, WV]
Full story...

What Are the State Governments Doing to Combat the Opioid Abuse
Epidemic?
May 21, 2015 [Source: House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee]
Full story...

SAMHSA Reports Highlight Rise in Tramadol-Related Hospital
Emergency Department Visits
May 14, 2015 [Source: SAMHSA]
Full story...

FDA Provides New Resources on Disposal of Unused Medications to
Prevent Theft and Accidental Ingestion
For more information...

New on the CDC Website: Injury Prevention & Control: Prescription Drug
Overdose
Visit CDC...

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State News

Pennsylvania Releases Opioid Prescribing Guidelines for Dentists
June 15, 2015 [Source: Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs; Pennsylvania Department of Health]
The departments of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) and Health today
released its third set of prescribing guidelines to address the prescribing of
opioids for acute or chronic head and oral-facial pain. Full story...

Illinois State Senate Passes First in the Nation Pilot Project to Test
Locking Devices for Opioids
[Source: Iris Y. Martinez, IL State Senator, 20th District]
Full story...
MA: MMS Launches Online Opioid Safety Resources Portal for Prescribers, Patients
June 5, 2015 [Source: Massachusetts Medical Society]
Full story...

CA: Supreme Court Passes on Challenge to Alameda's Drug Disposal Ordinance; California Counties Are Lined Up with Similar Initiatives
May 28, 2015 [Source: Policy and Medicine Blog]
Full story...

Substance Abuse and Addiction Research

Confronting the Creep of Opioid Abuse
May 19, 2015 [Source: Harvard University]
The good news: There is hope. The bad news: not enough people are aware of it. With opioid abuse on the rise, a panel of medical and policy officials convened on Monday at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health to discuss the growing problem, specifically the results of a national poll by The Boston Globe and the Chan School. Full story...

PCSS-O Updates

AAPM's Providers' Clinical Support System for Opioid Therapies (PCSS-O) Year One programming – a series of three, opioid-related educational webinars featuring AAPM Past President Lynn R. Webster, MD, are now available as enduring CME Sessions include Best Practices: Eight Principles for Safer Opioid Prescribing for Pain Management; Guide to Aberrant Drug-Related Behavior When Prescribing Opioids for Pain Management, and Responsible Prescribing of Methadone for Pain Management: Safety First. PCSS-O is a national training and mentoring project developed in response to the prescription opioid overdose epidemic.

For those who missed the live webinar sessions, Year One programming is now available for free, enduring CME. For more information, visit the AAPM Education Portal.

The PCSS-O project offers CME programs on the safe and effective use of opioids for treatment of chronic pain and safe and effective treatment of opioid use disorder. Funding for this initiative was made possible (in part) by Providers' Clinical Support System for Opioid Therapies (grant nos. 5H79TI023439 and 1H79TI025595) from SAMHSA. The views expressed in written conference materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services; nor does mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

Pain News
Pain Abstracts in the News

Delivering an Optimised Behavioural Intervention (OBI) To People with Low Back Pain with High Psychological Risk; Results and Lessons Learnt from a Feasibility Randomised Controlled Trial of Contextual Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CCBT) vs. Physiotherapy
June 16, 2015 [Source: BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders]
Abstract: Background: Low Back Pain (LBP) remains a common and costly problem. Psychological obstacles to recovery have been identified, but psychological and behavioural interventions have produced only moderate improvements.
Read more...

Overdose Education and Naloxone for Patients Prescribed Opioids in Primary Care: A Qualitative Study of Primary Care Staff
June 9, 2015 [Source: Journal of Internal General Medicine]
Abstract: Background: The rate of fatal unintentional pharmaceutical opioid poisonings has increased substantially since the late 1990s. Naloxone is an effective opioid antidote that can be prescribed to patients for bystander use in the event of an overdose. Primary care clinics represent settings in which large populations of patients prescribed opioids could be reached for overdose education and naloxone prescription.
Read more...

Opioids Contribute to Fracture Risk: A Meta-Analysis of 8 Cohort Studies
June 1, 2015 [Source: PLoS One]
Abstract: Objective: To evaluate the association between chronic opioid use for non-cancer pain and fracture risk by conducting a meta-analysis of cohort studies.
Read more...

Novel Expression Pattern of Neuropeptide Y Immunoreactivity in the Peripheral Nervous System in a Rat Model of Neuropathic Pain
May 27, 2015 [Source: Molecular Pain]
Abstract (provisional): Background: Neuropeptide Y (NPY) has been implicated in the modulation of pain. Under normal conditions, NPY is found in interneurons in the dorsal horn of the spinal cord and in sympathetic postganglionic neurons but is absent from the cell bodies of sensory neurons. Following peripheral nerve injury NPY is dramatically upregulated in the sensory ganglia.
Read more...

A Dietary Intervention for Chronic Diabetic Neuropathy Pain: a Randomized Controlled Pilot Study
May 26, 2015 [Source: Nutrition & Diabetes]
Background: Diabetic neuropathy is a common and often debilitating condition for which available treatments are limited. Because a low-fat plant-based diet has been shown to improve glycemic control in individuals with type 2 diabetes, we hypothesized that such a diet would reduce painful symptoms of diabetic neuropathy.

Read more...

PubMed Pain Abstracts

The following abstracts are posted at PubMed.gov:

Microglia Disrupt Mesolimbic Reward Circuitry in Chronic Pain
Taylor AM1, Castonguay A2, Taylor AJ3, Murphy NP3, Ghogha A3, Cook C4, Xue L5, Olmstead MC6, De Koninck Y2, Evans CJ3, Cahill CM7.
Abstract: Chronic pain attenuates midbrain dopamine (DA) transmission, as evidenced by a decrease in opioid-evoked DA release in the ventral striatum, suggesting that the occurrence of chronic pain impairs reward-related behaviors. However, mechanisms by which pain modifies DA transmission remain elusive.
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PMID: 26041913 [PubMed - in process]
Read more...

Regulation of Nav1.7: A Conserved SCN9A Natural Antisense Transcript Expressed in Dorsal Root Ganglia
Koenig J1, Werdehausen R2, Linley JE1, Habib AM1, Vernon J1, Loliengier S1, Eijkelkamp N3, Zhao J1, Okorokov AL4, Woods CG5, Wood JN6, Cox JJ1.
Abstract: The Nav1.7 voltage-gated sodium channel, encoded by SCN9A, is critical for human pain perception yet the transcriptional and post-transcriptional mechanisms that regulate this gene are still incompletely understood. Here, we describe a novel natural antisense transcript (NAT) for SCN9A that is conserved in humans and mice.
PMID: 26035178 [PubMed - in process]
Read more...

Opioid-Induced Esophageal Dysfunction (OIED) in Patients on Chronic Opioids
Am J Gastroenterol. 2015 Jun 2. doi: 10.1038/ajg.2015.154. [Epub ahead of print]
Ratuapli SK1, Crowell MD1, DiBaise JK1, Vela MF1, Ramirez FC1, Burdick GE1, Lacy BE2, Murray JA3.
Abstract: OBJECTIVES: Bowel dysfunction has been recognized as a predominant side effect of opioid use. Even though the effects of opioids on the stomach and small and large intestines have been well studied, there are limited data on opioid effects on esophageal function. The aim of this study was to compare esophageal pressure topography (EPT) of patients taking opioids at the time of the EPT (=24?h) with chronic opioid users who were studied off opioid medications for at least 24?h using the Chicago classification v3.0.
PMID: 26032150 [PubMed - as supplied by publisher]
Read more...

Opioids Potentiate Electrical Synaptic Transmission at Mixed Synapses on the Mauthner Cell
J Neurophysiol. 2015 May 27;jn.00165.2015. doi: 10.1152/jn.00165.2015. [Epub ahead of print]
Cachope R1, Pereda AE2.
Abstract: Opioid receptors were shown to modulate a variety of cellular processes in the vertebrate central nervous system, including synaptic transmission. While the effects of opioid receptors on chemically mediated transmission have been extensively investigated, little is known of their actions on gap junction-mediated electrical synapses. Here we report that
pharmacological activation of mu-opioid receptors led to a long-term enhancement of electrical (and glutamatergic) transmission at identifiable mixed synapses on the goldfish Mauthner cells.

Classical Conditioning of Analgesic and Hyperalgesic Pain Responses Without Conscious Awareness
Jensen K1, Kirsch I2, Odmalm S3, Kaptchuk TJ2, Ingvar M3.
Abstract: Pain reduction and enhancement can be produced by means of conditioning procedures, yet the role of awareness during the acquisition stage of classical conditioning is unknown. We used psychophysical measures to establish whether conditioned analgesic and hyperalgesic responses could be acquired by unseen (subliminally presented) stimuli. A 2 × 2 factorial design, including subliminal/supraliminal exposures of conditioning stimuli (CS) during acquisition/extinction, was used.
PMD: 25979940 [PubMed - as supplied by publisher]

Continued Participation in a Ten-Year Tight Control Treat-to-Target Study in Rheumatoid Arthritis: Why Keep Patients Doing their Best?
Markusse IM1, Dirven L1, Han KH2, Ronday HK3, Kerstens PJ4, Lems WF5, Huizinga TW1, Allaart CF1.
Abstract: OBJECTIVE: To identify risk factors for early study termination and motivators for adherence to a long-term followup trial and to improve completeness of long-term studies. CONCLUSION: Continued participation was relatively high in the Treatment Strategies for Rheumatoid Arthritis (BeSt) Study. Higher age, functional disability, drug-free remission, little joint damage, and few adverse events predicted early study termination. Main motives for continued participation were a willingness to contribute to research, help future patients, and because patients had good experiences with the study protocol.

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The following studies and trials are posted at ClinicalTrials.gov:

An Intervention to Improve Adolescent Headache Self-management (TH)
This study is not yet open for participant recruitment. (see Contacts and Locations)
Sponsor: Inflexxion, Inc.
Collaborator: University of California, Los Angeles
Information provided by (Responsible Party): Kimberlee Trudeau, Inflexxion, Inc.
ClinicalTrials.gov Identifier: NCT02475005
First received: June 12, 2015
Stated Purpose: The purpose of this study is to test the efficacy of a new app to help adolescents with chronic or reoccurring headaches self manage pain.

Primary Care Intervention to Reduce Prescription Opioid Overdoses (POST)
This study is not yet open for participant recruitment.
Verified June 2015 by Department of Veterans Affairs
Sponsor: Department of Veterans Affairs Information provided by (Responsible Party): Department of Veterans Affairs
Principal Investigator: Amy S Bohnert, PhD MHS BA, VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System, Ann Arbor, MI
ClinicalTrials.gov Identifier: NCT02464410
First received: May 21, 2015
Stated Purpose: The high rate of overdose and other adverse events
resulting from opioid pain medication use threatens the quality and safety of pain care in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and elsewhere and is a critical public health problem in the United States. Pain is a highly common condition among VHA patients, and opioid therapy constitutes a primary mode of pain treatment. This study seeks to address this issue by conducting a randomized controlled trial of a brief intervention to reduce overdose risk behaviors among Veteran patients receiving long-term opioid therapy.

Read more...

MS Symptom Management Study (ENHANCE)
This study is not yet open for participant recruitment.
Sponsor: University of Washington
Collaborator: National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Information provided by (Responsible Party): Mark Jensen, University of Washington
Principal Investigator: Mark Jensen, Ph.D., University of Washington
ClinicalTrials.gov Identifier: NCT02474940
First received: May 21, 2015
Stated Purpose: People with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) often have pain and/or fatigue. Unfortunately, available treatments provide inadequate relief for the majority of these individuals. There remains an urgent need for additional treatment options for MS-related symptoms. The purpose of this study is to see if alternative treatments that involve self-hypnosis training, neurofeedback training and/or mindfulness meditation training, or a combination of some of these treatments can help decrease pain and fatigue in people with MS.

Read more...

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Industry News

EFIC-Grünenthal Grant Honours 7 Young Scientists for Their Groundbreaking Pain Research Ideas
June 12, 2016 [Source: Grunenthal GmbH, Germany]
Full story...

Medicare Drug Plans Favor Generic Opioids that Lack Abuse Deterrent Properties
[Source: Avalere Health LLC]
Full story...

New Data Demonstrate Greater Pain Relief with Boston Scientific Precision Spectra™ Spinal Cord Stimulator System
June 10, 2015 [Source: Boston Scientific Corporation]
Full story...

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