

## Steps and Questions for Reassessment and Treatment Plan Refinement

Step 1: Review assessments and treatment plans to determine if further analysis is needed.

- Have new or different diagnoses emerged?
- Is the patient's goal for comfort and functioning realistic?
- What barriers to pain relief have been identified? Which have been addressed?
- What emotional distresses have been identified? Which have been addressed?

Step 2: Analyze the alignment of the treatment with the pain type.

- Are NSAIDs being used for mild pain, aching, or as part of multimodal therapy?
- Are mixed/weak opioids being used for moderate pain?
- Are strong opioids being used for severe pain?
- Are adjuvants directed at the cause; or for calming pain-generating nerves being used?
- Have medications been administered consistently enough to achieve a steady state?

Step 3: Consider the merit of changing the regimen, discuss with pharmacist and prescriber

- If ineffective or not tolerated, has switching the drug been considered?
- If a dose-response relationship was noted, has a dosage adjustment been tried?
- If effective intermittently have adjustments using the same drug been tried?, such as:
  - Scheduling ATC rather than PRN dosing?
  - Long-acting agent tried for constant pain with a known effective dose?

Step 4: Implement the refined analgesic regimen

- Are analgesics consistently offered on schedule?
- Are there 2 or more consecutive pain score ratings below the pain scale midpoint?
- Does dose adjustment +/- 25–50% achieve acceptable levels of comfort/side effects?
  - Work within limits of range order or secure revised order
- Add co-analgesics/adjuvants as ordered to target multiple mechanisms & cut side effects
- Document interventions and timely evaluations of responses to guide further refinement

Step 5: Use non-drug techniques to compliment the analgesic regimen

- Have a variety of techniques been tried?
- Has the technique the patient believes to be most effective been tried?
- Does reducing emotional distress also reduce pain levels?

Step 6: Access available resources (e.g. pain specialists) and referrals for advanced techniques.