



The Maryland State Medical Society

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MEDCHI PRESENTS ER/LA OPIOID REMS IN SALISBURY AND CUMBERLAND

BALTIMORE, March 21, 2014 — Opioid analgesics have become an important and effective medication in the treatment for a wide range of serious medical conditions. When used properly, opioid drugs provide significant benefits to patients. These drugs are also associated with the risk for abuse, misuse, diversion and death. According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), in 2009 more than 15,000 people died in the US after overdosing on narcotic pain relievers. This represents an increase of 300 percent in the last 2 decades. The statistics also show that for each death there are an additional 10 treatment admissions, 32 emergency room visits and 825 nonmedical users of these drugs. One study found that in the last decade opioid related fatal prescription overdoses exceeded those involving cocaine and heroin combined.

State level data for Maryland shows that we have not been immune from this growing problem. Prescription opioid analgesic-related admissions to Maryland Alcohol and Drug-Abuse Administration funded treatment programs increased 106% from 2007 to 2010 and by 139% as the primary reported substance of abuse. The statistics indicate that prescription drug abuse is highest among young people and women. For instance, in 2010 45% of opioid related treatment admissions were for people in their twenties.

The FDA has approved a risk evaluation and mitigation strategy (REMS) for extended-release and long-acting opioid medications. The Collaborative on REMS Education, a multi-disciplinary collaboration of 10 Partners and three cooperating organizations, have designed a core curriculum based on needs assessment, practice gaps, clinical competencies, learner self-assessment, with shared tools, resources and outcomes to meet the requirements of the FDA REMS Blueprint

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society is participating in this educational endeavor, by offering two educational activities on March 22 and March 29, 2014. On March 22nd, at Peninsula Regional Medical Center, in Salisbury, MedChi will present ER/LA Opioid REMS: Achieving Safe Use While Improving Patient Care, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Then on March 29th, MedChi will repeat this activity at Western Maryland Health Systems in Cumberland, again from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. These activities will also review the Maryland Prescription Drug Monitoring Program known as the PDMP.

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It is the largest physician organization in Maryland. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit www.medchi.org.