

# Healthy Living with Pain (HeLP) Program

## A FHT initiative for patients with chronic pain: an overview after the first year

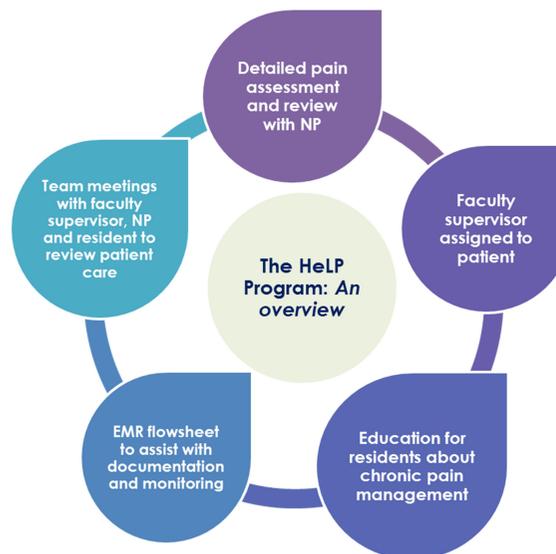
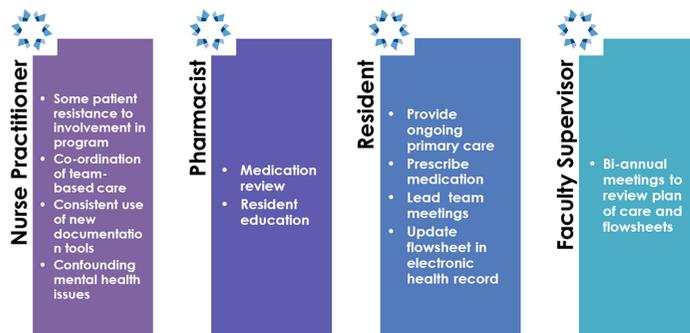
### BACKGROUND

- Chronic pain represents a \$6 billion burden to the health care system annually
- Patients with chronic pain often had unclear diagnoses, inconsistent care, poor monitoring and sub-optimal pain control
- Aberrant drug behaviours were commonly encountered
- Many patients not consistently monitored with an opioid agreement or urine drug screens

### PROGRAM GOALS

- Improve patients' pain and function
- Provide better continuity of care
- Reduce aberrant drug behaviors
- Support residents & staff

### TEAM MEMBERS



### PROGRAM BENEFITS

- More support for residents caring for patients with chronic pain and complex medical/mental health issues.
- Reduction in opioid dose for several patients
- More appropriate monitoring of opioid prescribing (contracts signed, urine drug screens on file)
- Identification of aberrant behaviors such as double-doctoring & divergence
- Continuity of care
- Improved pain and psychosocial assessments
- Better access to clinic services
- Patient education around harm reduction

### PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- 53 patients since December, 2013
  - 29 female / 24 male
- Ages 24-84 years
- 33 patients currently active

#### Active Patients

Diagnoses	# of Patients
Back Pain	7
Osteoarthritis of hip or knee	9
Fibromyalgia	3
Undefined chronic pain	3
Trigeminal neuralgia or TMJ	4
Ankylosing spondylitis	2
Ehlers-Danlos type 3	2
Headaches	3

#### Inactive Patients

- 10 females, 10 males
  - 3 moved
  - 2 died
  - 3 tapered off opioids successfully
  - 6 denied opioid prescription for aberrant behaviors and left our care
  - 6 no longer needed program (Rx by specialist or other team)

### PROGRAM CHALLENGES

- Some patients initially resistant to be involved in the program
- Coordination of team-based care
- Consistent use of EMR flowsheet
- Confounding mental health issues
- Resisting medication changes encouraged by the team
- Managing consistent opioid prescribing