

Annual Report
Missouri Advisory Council on Pain and Symptom Management

February 1, 2007

Pain is the oldest medical problem and the most universal physical affliction of mankind. It is one of the most common reasons for patients to seek medical attention and one of the most prevalent medical complaints in the United States. Effective pain and symptom management presents a significant challenge for individuals, physicians and other health care professionals. Clinical experience has demonstrated that adequate pain and symptom management enhances function and improves the quality of life, while uncontrolled pain contributes to disability and despair. Although medical science has learned a great deal about pain and symptom management in the last twenty years, this knowledge has not been well integrated into practice.

To assist in addressing these issues, the Missouri Advisory Council on Pain and Symptom Management (Council) was established by the Missouri legislature in 2003 (RSMo 192.350-355). The Council is comprised of nineteen members including health care providers, policy makers, and a pain patient. Among other mandates, the Council was directed to create an annual report.

The Council convened four times in 2006. Major activities and accomplishments include:

- Web page dedicated to pain and symptom management on the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) web site: <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/PainManagement/> was updated and expanded. In addition to guidelines, standards, statutes and regulations, a number of consumer and health professional resources have been added.
- Continued dialogue with the Boards of Healing Arts, Nursing and Pharmacy to explore the development of a joint statement by these boards on pain and symptom management.
- Established the Missouri Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey as the source of baseline data to help determine the impact of pain on Missourians' lives. In 2005, almost 30 percent of Missourians reported that pain made it hard for them to perform usual activities, such as self-care, work or recreation.
- Partnered with the 'Changing the Face of Pain in Missouri' collaborative consisting of more than 20 agencies, to develop a two-year statewide strategic plan. Focus areas of the plan include education, provider practice improvement and public policy/system change. This framework will enable all partnering organizations to achieve mutual goals in pain and symptom management and maximize use of resources.
- Presented an overview of Council roles and activities at the joint conference of the Kansas City and St. Louis Chapters of the American Society for Pain Management Nursing and Missouri Pain Initiative and at the Missouri End of Life Coalition Policy Summit.
- Coordinated development of a consumer education brochure with the Missouri Pain Initiative.

The Council recognizes the profound consequences of uncontrolled pain, including both personal costs and financial burden imposed on society. In order to improve the lives of Missourians, assessment and management of pain must be addressed. The Council will continue to evaluate current barriers to pain care and make additional recommendations to enable health care providers to enhance the quality of care and quality of life for Missourians.