

In my first official message, I thank you all for the warm welcome and support. My first task has been to review the impressive work already accomplished by the Oregon Pain Commission and the DHS Pain Management Program. There is such a wealth of information from groups and individuals dedicated to this worthy effort. Based on my past experience in direct patient care, pain management basically consisted of one primary intervention...medication. In the early 90's, I was offered an elective course as part of my Nursing Program curriculum, titled Nursing Interventions in Pain Management. This class exposed students to new, alternative measures, such as acupuncture, guided imagery and therapeutic touch, that would not have been previously been considered as part of a treatment plan for pain management. Thankfully, we have progressed and I am excited for this opportunity to participate with other professionals in continuing this effort.

My previous position was monitoring the care of elders residing in long-term care facilities. At times, I observed residents who had ceased to participate in their activities of daily living and this decline was viewed as a "natural part of aging.". This notion is often accepted without consideration given that pain might be a significant factor for an individual's withdrawal or change in behavior.

On a federal level, pain management has become a recent focus in the regulation of Nursing Facilities. There has been an increased emphasis for providers, caregivers, and regulators to consider the impact of unrelieved pain when planning care, delivering services and assessing quality of life. As Oregon ages, it is crucial to take account of this population in the work of the Pain Management Program as we collaborate to improve the quality of life for all Oregonians impacted by chronic pain.

Please feel free to drop me a line with any ideas or thoughts on how we might best utilize this website for the greatest benefit of those with pain. I look forward to hearing from you and to this great work ahead.

*Diana*