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State commission seeks public input on chronic pain issues

Acute and chronic pain disorders are fast becoming among the most pressing concerns for consumers, employers and health care providers. According to a recent report from the Institute of Medicine, chronic pain affects at least 116 million American adults and costs up to \$635 billion annually. These conditions are often complicated, involve many body systems and may require the use of multiple medications or a variety of treatments.

The Oregon Pain Management Commission (OPMC) invites you to take part in an online public survey designed to help the commission better understand the effect of chronic pain on the lives of Oregonians. The survey will give citizens the opportunity to voice concerns about care, treatment and the quality of life as it is impacted by pain. The survey will remain open through November.

The survey takes about 15 minutes to complete and can be found on the commission's website at: oregon.gov/OHA/OHPR/PMC/index.shtml.

Individuals with pain may experience emotional and psychological issues. If they are disabled or unable to work, the financial burden affects them, their family, their workplace and community. Mismanaged pain leads to more visits to the emergency room and to medical providers, additional testing costs and increased prescription expenses. All of these dramatically increase health care costs in Oregon.

One objective of the survey is to identify the financial impact when pain patients are unable to access treatment in a primary care setting or when their treatment is not

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9/27/11 – Pain management survey – p2

managed successfully. Other survey goals include identifying the level and ease of access to health care for chronic pain conditions and to identify barriers that Oregonians face as a result of their pain.

Results of the voluntary survey will be analyzed for trends and issues identified by Oregon participants. No person or individual response will be identified. The information collected will assist the OPMC in fulfilling its mission.

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About the Oregon Pain Management Commission

The commission was created in 2001 through our state legislative process for the primary purpose of developing ways to improve pain management services through research, policy and education. The OPMC represents the concerns of individuals with pain and makes recommendations to the state Legislature and to the Governor.