The Essentials of Pain Management series is designed for healthcare providers as an overview of the fundamentals of pain medicine, in addition to identifying best practices and practical approaches to the treatment of common pain disorders and clinical situations. The nine-course series addresses the need for continuing education for clinicians treating people with pain and is designed to advance patient outcomes by improving the assessment, treatment, and management of patients with various pain disorders.

Each course includes a 10 question post-test with multiple attempts, and awards up to 26.25 continuing nursing education (CNE) contact hours (22.5 PHARM). This program offers the flexibility to access each course online at any time for staff and educator convenience, and offers hospital systems the ability to document staff proficiency and validate staff knowledge. This series will help reduce risk and errors, increase efficiency and patient care, reinforce and document staff competency, and grow the knowledge and skills of the providers in your healthcare system.

Nine Courses
Course 1: Anatomy and Physiology of Pain

Objectives: The goal of this course is to provide a foundation for understanding nociception and the physiologic process of pain. Treating pain sufficiently is consequently a large concern for individuals and society. In order to treat pain and its sequelae, one must thoroughly understand and appreciate the basic mechanisms of nociception. The physiology behind pain perception serves as the rational for therapeutic interventions and potential new targets for drug development. Brief pain epidemiology, classification and essential theories are also reviewed.

This course awards 4.0 CNE Contact Hours (1.0 PHARM).

After studying the information presented here, you will be able to:

- Explain the importance of therapeutic interventions in the management of pain.
- Differentiate between acute, chronic, and subacute pain.
- Differentiate between somatic, visceral, and neuropathic pain.
- Discuss the sequence of pain perception.
- Identify neurotransmitters involved in nociception.
Course 2: Biology of Addiction

Description: Addiction is a treatable, chronic, relapsing brain disease that is the product of a complex combination of genetic and environmental factors. The individual with addiction experiences compulsive, repetitive use of a substance, despite increasingly negative consequences and often despite a fervent desire to quit. The chronic nature of the disease manifests itself as a craving, which can be triggered weeks, months, or even years after use of a substance has ceased and may lead to relapse. The goal of this course is understanding addiction to substances.

This course awards 3.0 CNE Contact Hours (3.0 PHARM).

Objectives: After studying the information presented here, you will be able to:

- Define addiction.
- Describe the impact of addiction as a public health problem in the United States.
- Discuss the roles of nature and nurture in the future development of addictive behaviors.
- Discuss theories of brain function as they relate to addiction.
- Define cross-addiction.
- List pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment options for addiction.

Course 3: Nursing Pain Assessment and Interventions

Description: Nursing staff at the bedside, in the clinic, and in community settings have been on the forefront of assessing patients for a myriad of acute to chronic medical issues but still the assessment of pain, the determination of appropriate treatment options, and the re-assessment to adjust treatment is not always done. The goal of this course is to consolidate the clinical knowledge base and recommend methods to combine the science of medicine with the art of nursing in delivering the best pain care.

This course awards 2.5 CNE Contact Hours (1.8 PHARM).

Objectives: After studying the information presented here, you will be able to:

- Define somatic, visceral and neuropathic pain states.
- Identify two different pain assessment tools that can be used for verbal and nonverbal patients.
- Explain the three types of barriers to pain assessment.
- Identify what class of medications is most effective for somatic and neuropathic pain conditions.

Course 4: Postoperative Pain Management

Description: Pain management has gained increasing attention in the last decade. Despite this growing attention to pain control, studies indicate that providers still do not adequately manage acute postoperative pain. The reason for this is multifold. Health care teams are often not adequately educated about pain management options. Providers as well as patients fear potential side effects of opioids and other interventions, and patients thus underreport symptoms. The goal of this course is to understand and compare pre- and post-operative pain management strategies and methods.

This course awards 4.0 CNE Contact Hours (4.0 PHARM).

Objectives: After studying the information presented here, you will be able to:

- Describe pre-operative pain management strategies to lessen postoperative pain.
- Compare the use, mechanism of action, advantages, and disadvantages of a variety of pain management agents.
- Discuss non-oral analgesia delivery routes, including epidural anesthesia, intrathecal anesthesia, and peripheral nerve blocks.
- List non-pharmacological methods for pain management.
Course 5: Monitoring for Opioid Induced Respiratory Depression

Description: Efforts to comply with mandated pain standards and to improve patient satisfaction with pain management have led to better surveillance of pain treatment outcomes. Unfortunately, the increased surveillance has led to more aggressive use of opioid and similar sedating medications. The increased use of pain medications has resulted in an increased rate of negative outcomes such as excessive sedation and excessive respiratory depression. The goal of this course is to understand and learn preventable measures of opioid respiratory depression in the hospital setting.

This course awards 2.5 CNE Contact Hours (2.5 PHARM).

Objectives: After studying the information presented here, you will be able to:

- Identify best practices for preventing opioid induced respiratory depression in the hospital setting.
- Differentiate three types of electronic monitoring devices.
- Describe the pathophysiology of opioid-induced respiratory depression.
- Formulate a plan of care for use of positive airway pressure in patients with undiagnosed and diagnosed obstructive sleep apnea.

Course 6: Neuraxial Anesthesia for Managing the Pain of Labor

Description: The term “labor pain relief” conveys different meaning to different people. For some, supportive care alone provides sufficient relief from anxiety to allow a woman to control her own pain response in labor. At the other end of the spectrum, some women wish complete relief from all labor pain. Matching the woman’s expectations and wishes for labor analgesia with the appropriate pain management techniques is a fundamental challenge in the birth process. The goal of this course is to understand and discuss choices available to pregnant women and factors that influence patient pain management in labor.

This course awards 2.5 CNE Contact Hours (2.5 PHARM).

Objectives: After studying the information presented here, you will be able to:

- List analgesic choices that are available to women with labor pain.
- Define neuraxial anesthesia.
- Discuss parenteral opioid administration in labor.
- Discuss the use of inhaled analgesic gases in labor.
- List factors that influence a patient’s choices for pain management in labor.

Course 7: Medical Marijuana in Women’s Health

Description: When reviewing the potential use of any drug, it is important to note the drug’s intended effects as well as side effects—i.e., efficacy and safety. This is important especially when studying the effects of a drug on women’s health. The goal of this course is to highlight both the intended and unintended effects of cannabis on women’s health, including the possible effects on childbearing and any developmental issues in the offspring of mothers who use the drug during pregnancy.

This course awards 2.25 CNE Contact Hours (2.25 PHARM).

Objectives: After studying the information presented here, you will be able to:

- Briefly describe the history of medical marijuana use.
- Describe four medical conditions for which medical marijuana has been used.
- Discuss the risks of medical marijuana use in women’s health.
Course 8: Prescription Drug Abuse in Pregnancy

Description: Seventy percent of Americans take at least one prescription drug and of these, more than two-thirds take at least two prescription. With so many people taking prescription medications, it is no surprise that prescription drug abuse has reached epidemic proportions. In recent years, the number of overdose deaths involving prescription opioids has exceeded overdose deaths due to cocaine and heroin combined. The goal of this course is to understand prescription drug abuse, risk factors and consequences of prescription drug abuse during pregnancy.

This course awards 2.5 CNE Contact Hours (2.5 PHARM).

Objectives: After studying the information presented here, you will be able to:

- Define prescription drug abuse.
- Identify women at increased risk for prescription drug abuse during pregnancy.
- List three maternal, fetal, or neonatal consequences of prescription drug abuse.

Course 9: Chronic Pain Management

Description: Chronic pain affects more than 100 million people a year in the U.S. and accounts for 20% of outpatient visits. It is estimated that about one in five adults in the U.S. reports symptoms of chronic or persistent pain and about two-thirds seek help from a primary care physician. But many of these and others also seek assistance from other clinicians and in various settings, making chronic pain and its management education important for healthcare providers. The goal of this course is to understand chronic or persistent pain, and its management.

This course awards 3.0 CNE Contact Hours (3.0 PHARM).

Objectives: After studying the information presented here, you will be able to:

- Define chronic pain.
- Discuss the interrelationships between chronic pain and functional impairment, disability, anxiety, depression, problems with personal relationships, sleep dysfunction, and disruption of activities of daily living.
- Identify strategies for realistic goal-setting in the management of chronic pain.
- List non-pharmacologic treatment options for the management of chronic pain.
- List pharmacologic agents commonly used to manage chronic pain.
- Explain combined pharmacologic treatment in the management of chronic pain.
- Discuss side effects of commonly prescribed medications used in the management of chronic pain.
- List factors and behaviors predictive or indicative of addiction.
- Define opioid maintenance therapy for chronic pain.