



SIP

Societal Impact of Pain

2017

**Structured Cooperation
between Health Care
Systems tackling the
societal impact of pain!**

“Do we need policies
addressing Pain in the
Elderly?”

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Disclosure Statement of conflict of interest in the context of the subject of this presentation



Within the past 12 months, I or my spouse/partner have had following financial interest/arrangement(s) or affiliation(s)

- **Support for travel** YES (EFIC).....
- **Honoraria for lectures**No.....
- **Honoraria for advisory board activities**No.....
- **Participation in clinical trials**No.....
- **Research funding**No.....
- **Financial shares and options**No.....
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Chronic pain in older adults

➤ Significant chronic pain affects 20% of adults

Breivik *et al* 2007

- Rising to 62% of those over 75 Elliott *et al* 1999

➤ Many diseases causing chronic pain increase with age

- E.g. arthritis, diabetes, dementia

➤ Many risk factors for chronic pain are associated with ageing

- E.g. reduced physical activity, co-morbidities, reduced social networks Evenson *et al* 2002, Peat *et al* 2004

Impact of pain on older adults

› **Chronic pain is associated with**

- Poor general health (physical, psychological, social) Smith *et al* 2001
- Increased mortality Torrance *et al* 2010
- Increased resource use (carers, NHS, benefits) Maniadakis and Gray 1999

› **In older adults chronic pain is**

- Often under-reported Sofaer-Bennet *et al* 2007
- More likely to be intense, disabling and need treatment Elliott *et al* 1999
- Particularly likely to cause isolation, disability and depression Citra *et al* 2006

Managing pain in older adults

- 65% of people with chronic pain use prescribed medicines
- 40% of are dissatisfied with their treatment Breivik *et al* 2006
- Particular difficulties with drugs in older adults
 - More (dangerous) side effects
 - Polypharmacy, with interactions
 - Changing physiology
- Need to look at non-pharmaceutical management
 - Eg self-management, education, CBT
 - These interventions may not transfer directly to older adults

➤ Discussion of Pain with Older Adults

- 2-3 minutes duration
- 48% of visits to GP involved pain discussion
- Gender and Race influenced discussion
- Physician effect
- Severity of Pain
- Time Constraints



Perspectives from Older People

- › “Pain is exhausting... You have to walk slowly. You have to stop and make an excuse or pretend to look in a shop window so that you can put your hand on the window and rest a moment. It’s humiliating”.
- › ‘Pain is frustrating because you can’t do things for yourself...Everything’s a challenge.’
- › ‘I get very depressed and anxious about it...it’s frightening, especially when you live on your own.’



- › ‘Pain can make you feel lonely because you feel that you’re the only one that is suffering and can cope with it, and that is a lonely experience.’

Extracts taken from 'listening events' and interviews held with older people who suffer pain (Help the Aged)

A collaborative expert literature review of pain education, assessment and management

- [Pat Schofield](#), [Beatrice Sofaer-Bennett](#), [Thomas Hadjistavropoulos](#), [Sandra Zwakhalen](#), [Cary Brown](#) and [Dagmar Westerling](#)
- [Aging Health](#). 8.1 (Feb. 2012): p43.
- DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2217/ahe.11.53>
- Copyright: COPYRIGHT 2012 Future Medicine Ltd.
<http://www.futuremedicine.com/loi/ahe>
- ReadSpeaker:
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- *SCH COST Action TD1005* Pain Assessment in Patients with Impaired Cognition, especially Dementia
- Work Group Two – Nursing (PS,SZ,IG,ES,NA, RD,CS)
- Exploring care workers experiences of the assessment of pain amongst older adults with cognitive impairment

Assessment of Pain - Challenges

- Survey of Care staff across Europe.
- 415 responses. (UK 28, Netherlands 139, Germany 147, Denmark 9, Belgium 35, Switzerland 18, Austria 39)
- The majority (48.5%) of the nursing staff currently worked in the hospital.

Results

- Only 25% of sample use guidelines.
- Different scales across countries.
- Dissatisfaction about the current knowledge of pain assessment in cognitively impaired older adults.
- There seems to be an international struggle to interpret findings of the observational pain scales available.

Summary

- Ageing
- Dementia
- Not an homogenous group
- Impact significant
- Changing demographic
- Few Guidelines
- Not widely used



- **Do we need policies addressing Pain in the Elderly?"**

Yes!

So is pain inevitable?



Thank you



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