



NC Pauline Chong with Nurse Practitioner Patti Kastanias

## Pain Management in Canada

By Pauline Chong (Pain Management Service)

### Two Canadian hospitals' novel approaches to managing chronic pain at home and acute pain in the hospital.

Mount Sinai Hospital and Toronto Western Hospital are both renowned research and teaching hospitals in Toronto, Canada, that have different approaches to pain management from what we're used to seeing in TTSH.

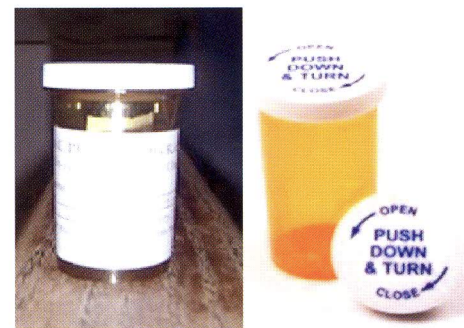
In addition to involving a multi-disciplinary team in managing chronic pain in Mount Sinai Hospital, outpatients who can't travel to the hospital for follow-up visits are seen, remotely, within their community through a Tele-health Communication System (TCS). The team of doctors and nurses use a combination of video conferencing, e-mails and telephone calls, to "see" their patients in the presence of their family physicians, psychologists, physiotherapists

or community nurses to coordinate continuity of care. After the consultation, fax copies of prescriptions are sent to their family physicians' clinics, designated pharmacists or drug stores.

Under a program for Oral Patient Controlled Analgesia in Toronto Western Hospital, Nurse Practitioner Patti Kastanias initiated a study in 2005. Patients exercise their autonomy by taking a dose of oral analgesia e.g. Oxycodone, that is kept at the patients' bedside whenever they experience break-through pain. The patients then record the effectiveness of the medication in a diary. The nurses then note the patients' entries in the diary and top up the next dose of analgesia. The findings of the study, published in the September 2006 issue of Pain Management Nursing, showed that 92% of the patients were satisfied with the program.

The TTSH Pain Management Service currently follows-up on outpatients through telephone calls. As TTSH sees increasing numbers of patients from ASEAN countries like Indonesia and Vietnam, following up on patients through video conferencing maybe an option for the future. On the other hand, to introduce Oral Patient Controlled Analgesia where Opioids are involved in TTSH, any implications under Singapore's current legislation on the safe custody of controlled substances need to be considered. Presently, TTSH only offers Patient Controlled Analgesia delivered intravenously for post-operative patients; and,

via epidural catheters or subcutaneously for oncology patients as well as patients with chronic pain.



Oral PCA

## What's Next?

### Nursing Journal Club

May 26, 2011  
June 16, 2011

### Nurses Dialogue Session

June 13, 2011

## Editorial Team

Ang Wei Kiat (10B)

Tan Tit Chai (6A)

Rozana Arshad (6B)

Deanna Santos (6A)

Jane Chee (NC)

Josephine Anthony (NC)

Quek Hwee Chen (NC)

Isabel Ng (NS)