

OP29.4

Knowledge, attitudes and behavior of primary care physicians regarding chronic pain and its treatment

Gamze Akyol(1), T Gunvar(1), E Teyin(2), E Yildirim(1), S Hatipoglu(3), D Guldal(1)

(1) Dokuz Eylul University, Department of Family Medicine, Izmir, Turkey

(2) Private Gazi Hospital, Algology Clinics, Izmir, Turkey

(3) Konak No:24 Family Health Center, Izmir, Turkey

Corresponding author: Dr Gamze Akyol, Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Medicine, Family Medicine Department, Izmir, Turkey. E-mail: gazmeakyol@hotmail.com

Background & Aim: Chronic pain is a widely common problem with several significant negative effects on quality of life. While most of these patients are supposed to be treated in primary care and often need narcotic analgesics and/or therapeutic interventions for effective pain control, many primary care physicians are reluctant to prescribe these medications and patients often cannot receive the appropriate treatment. The aim of this study is to determine the knowledge, attitudes and behavior regarding management of chronic pain amongst primary care physicians in Izmir.

Method: A cross sectional study was conducted in nine central districts of Izmir with a sample of 247 primary care physicians. Data were collected via questionnaires consisted of 74 questions about demographic characteristics and physicians' knowledge, attitudes and behavior regarding management of chronic pain management. All data analyses including Chi-square and t-tests were performed using SPSS software (ver.15).

Results: 38.9% (n=96) of the participants were female. Mean age was 45.16 ± 5.77 and mean number of years as a physician was 21.46 ± 5.63 years. 68.0% of the physicians indicated that they felt sufficient in management of chronic pain. According to the participants, NSAIDs were the most successful method for providing effective pain control. Majority of physicians stated that they do not prefer narcotic analgesics for treatment of chronic pain. Physicians who indicated that they would 'never use any narcotic medications for treatment of chronic pain' were significantly more prone to believe that there is a high risk of addiction for these medications ($p=0.011$). Paracetamol was believed to be less effective; but also to have less side effects, to be easy to access and to be the most preferred by the patients.

Conclusions: Interventions seem to be needed in order to improve both the physicians' knowledge and their attitudes regarding management of chronic pain.