BACKGROUND

- In 2014, almost 2 million Americans abused or were dependent on prescription opioids.1

- **Opioids are responsible for:**
  - Three-fourths of all prescription drug overdose deaths in 20132
  - More than 16,200 deaths in the United States in 20132
  - Nationally, deaths involving opioids have quadrupled since 1999

- **The sharp rise in prescription opioid overdose deaths closely parallels the increase in the prescribing of these drugs.**

- **Opioid sales in the United States quadrupled from 1999 to 2013**

- **Parallels the increase in the prescribing of these drugs.**

OBJECTIVES

- To conduct a focus group that would identify attitudes, emotions, and thoughts regarding opioid use as a treatment option for CNCP patients.
- To provide clinicians with a better understanding of patients' and providers' perceptions about CNCP and its treatment with opioids.
- To provide clinicians with a better understanding of providers' struggles and emotions about CNCP and its treatment with opioids.
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RESULTS

- **Focus group main themes on CNCP patients and treatment (Table 1):**
  1. The CNCP Patient Population
  2. Provider Strategies and Practices
  3. Provider Struggles and Emotions
  4. Challenges in CNCP Management
  5. What Works and What Else May Work

- **Among sixteen emotions, the most commonly exhibited by participants during the focus group were:** engaged, agreeing, calm, and quiet.

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STATEMENT AND ANSWER SAMPLES:

- **A new patient is scheduled for chronic pain:**
  
- **Difficulty managing patient expectations:**
  
- **I know who will abuse opioids.**
  
- **The CNCP Patient Population:**
  
- **I immediately start to notice, physically, anxiety and discomfort because of previous encounters when I got yelled at or when things went terribly wrong.**

QUESTION AND ANSWER SAMPLES:

- **Is there self-doubt for clinicians managing CNCP?**
  
- **Do resident physicians feel targeted by patients?**
  
- **Do clinicians mistrust patients?**

CONCLUSIONS

- While a predominance of negative experiences and challenges were reported, positive emotions during this focus group demonstrated that providers appreciate the opportunity to share their experiences on this sensitive topic.
- Primary care providers face barriers to treat CNCP patients on an individual and institutional level. Better provider training and implementation of standard guidelines were among the most common suggestions for improvement.
- Input obtained during this focus group was used to help our institution develop standardized practice guidelines for the use of opioids for CNCP in the primary care setting.

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REFERENCES

1. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2014.
2. CDC. CDC WONDER Multiple Cause of Death data, 1999–2013.