

"I'm a Nurse. What's My Role When Caring for Patients With Pain?"

SCOPE of Pain Colleague to Colleague Podcast #24

Welcome back to SCOPE of Pain's podcast series. This is Dr. Daniel Alford, Professor of Medicine and Course Director for the Boston University Chobanian and Avedisian School of Medicine SCOPE of Pain Program.

I'm Ilana Hardesty, your moderator. In this episode, I'll be speaking with Dr. Daniel Alford, a primary care physician and an addiction medicine specialist at Boston Medical Center, and on faculty at Boston University, and with Catherine Abrams, a clinical research nurse at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta. They'll discuss the roles nurses in primary care practices can play in the care of patients prescribed opioids for the treatment of pain.

You asked about the potential roles of nurses in safer opioid prescribing, and I'm going to list a few examples of what a nurse can do. A nurse can complete a pain assessment, which includes assessing for treatment benefits, assess for risk of substance used by using validated screening tools, provide patient education, including safe opioid storage and disposal, obtain urine drug screens and performing pill counts, tracking opioid refills to ensure no early refills. Nurses can review the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, PDMP is allowed by the state, educating patients and their families on signs and symptoms of overdose and use of Naloxone, The nurse can also assist the primary care clinician in arranging for treatment of opioid use disorders if required.

For me, I get the most satisfaction out of my nursing career by developing effective relationships with patients, who have complex conditions, like those suffering with chronic pain, or the disease of addiction. I've learned that building trust is what allows for that space to have honest conversations, which is important for safety and improve health outcomes.

Thanks for listening, you're not alone in facing these challenging issues, this topic is addressed in more detail in the SCOPE of Pain program available in online, live webinars, and podcast formats where you can earn CME, CE, and ACPE credits. Visit myCME.com/scopeofpainlearningcenter.



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