



OUR PATIENTS
COME FIRST

April 25, 2016

Dear Colleague:

As you know, drug abuse has become a spreading epidemic amongst our community, especially the youth, which has caused many to lose their lives. There is not a week that passes by without hearing devastating news due to drug abuse. It is our obligation as physicians to educate the youth in our community on the harmful effects of drug exploitation. Through scientific advances, we now know more about how drugs work in the brain than ever before. We also know that drug addiction can be successfully treated to help people stop abusing drugs and lead productive lives. Research shows that combining addiction treatment medications with behavioral therapy is very successful.

The state of Michigan monitors physicians' prescription of controlled substances, such as Opioid, with a program named "Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs)". PDMPs are statewide electronic databases with controlled substances prescription data that allow providers to monitor patients who are going to multiple providers and pharmacies to obtain controlled substances. This data is available to providers and pharmacies and include 12 months of data: date dispensed, patient name, provider name, pharmacy name, medication, and dose. In our last credentialing committee meeting we faced problems that the state has penalized some physicians for over prescribing pain medications, which could cause physicians to lose their license.

As physicians, we can help our community by undertaking the following with drugs such as Opioid:

- Determine the appropriateness of opioid analgesics
- Assess patients for opioid misuse risk
- Counsel patients on opioid safety, risks, and realistic benefits
- Better monitor patients who have been prescribed opioids
- Make decisions on continuing, modifying, or discontinuing opioid analgesics
- Safely discontinue opioids when there is too little benefit or too much risk.
- Drug screen monitoring

UOP will take action by visiting Churches, Mosques, Synagogues, Temples, schools, etc., which will help spread awareness amongst the youth in our community on the damaging effects of drug abuse. UOP is comprised of nearly 1000 physicians and we are confident that we can make a difference. The UOP committee has put this issue as their first priority to ensure that this problematic epidemic becomes addressed in our community. If you have any suggestions or would be willing to volunteer, please call UOP at 313-240-9867.

Sincerely,

Yasser T. Hammoud M.D.
CEO, Medical Director