Algorithm for Improved Management of Persistent Pain in the Long-term Care Setting

STAGE A: Baseline Assessment

Retrospectively identify 25 residents who were recently admitted to your LTCF

Review and analyze how residents were evaluated and treated for persistent pain (see performance measures I-V included in algorithm)

Set goals for performance improvement

STAGE B: Intervention & Action Plan Implementation

Educate and train LTCF staff on best practices outlined below

Performance Measure I: Documented Pain Assessment

- Pain history, symptoms
- Standardized pain scales on admission (Numeric Intensity Scale, Verbal/Visual Descriptor Scale, Pain Faces, etc)
- Further diagnostic testing to identify cause(s) of pain

Performance Measure II:
Physical Examination to Identify Cause(s)
of Pain

Performance Measure III: Documented Cause of Pain

Performance Measure IV: Documented Care Plan

- First-line medications
- Nonpharmacologic treatments (eg, physical therapy)

Performance Measure V: Periodic Assessment of Care Plan

Unsatisfactory pain reduction

- Increase medication dose
- Second-line medications or combination therapies
- Other nonpharmacologic treatments

Satisfactory pain reduction

- Reduce medication dose or nonpharmacologic treatments
- Re-evaluate pain every 1-2 weeks and adjust treatment as necessary

Repeat until pain is controlled

STAGE C: Reassessment

Allow 6-8 weeks for action plan to take effect

Retrospectively identify 25 new residents who were recently admitted to your LTCF

Review and analyze how residents were evaluated and treated for persistent pain

Reset goals for performance improvement as needed

Instructions for Implementation

This toolkit was created based on a completed performance improvement CME activity, and accordingly is designed on the following model of performance or quality improvement:

- Stage A: Learning from current practice performance assessment
- Stage B: Learning from the application of PI to patient care
- Stage C: Learning from the evaluation of the PI effort

Instructions for Stage A:

- Review a minimum of 25 patient charts (or another number determined to be appropriate) from
 patients/residents within the past 6 months, and complete the attached Data Collection Form, one form
 per patient chart
- Calculate and analyze how residents were evaluated and treated for persistent pain based on the provided Performance Measures and Calculation Instructions
- Set goals for performance improvement

Instructions for Stage B:

- Educate LTCF on best practices; PowerPoint slides used for clinical in-service meetings are attached, and/or you can use other sources to customize the education as needed
- Develop and implement action plans for improvement (at the facility level and/or clinician level, as determined to be relevant and appropriate)

Instructions for Stage C:

- Allow several weeks for the action plan(s) to take effect—the amount of time needed will depend on several factors, including the specific actions taken and number of residents with pain
- Identify 25 new residents (or another number determined to be appropriate) admitted to LTCF since completion of Stage B, and complete the attached Data Collection Form, one form per patient chart
- Calculate and analyze how residents were evaluated and treated for persistent pain based on the provided Performance Measures and Calculation Instructions
- If desired, set new performance goals again and repeat Stages B and C to reach desired outcomes