



Hot Topics in Spine

Surgery: Volume V

Over recent months, there have been noteworthy staffing changes at Town & Country Crossing Orthopedics. Our long-term medical assistant Tosha pursued an out-of-state family opportunity. We wish our former team member the best of luck in her future endeavor. With these changes, the Taylor Spine Team is excited to introduce two new team members. Kacey McNeely has joined as a medical assistant and worker's compensation coordinator and Laura Milberg has fulfilled the role of radiology technologist. The Taylor Spine Team is approaching these changes as an opportunity to improve communication and the care that we offer to injured claimants. Our new staff has quickly proven to be valuable assets to our practice and are eager to begin building professional relationships and working with each of you.

Shifting focus, current post-graduate studies by Joshua Newman PA-C (Masters of Business Administration) has also facilitated a critical assessment of my spine practice. Ongoing education has validated our team approach to managing spine patients in complicated venues (worker's compensation and litigation). A group is defined as *"two or more individuals interacting with each other to accomplish a common goal"* whereas a team is *"a mature group that shares a common purpose, responsibility, and accountability for achieving performance goals"*. Studies have shown that the existence of a team can alter motivation and influence the behavior of team members. A team environment is able to nourish synergy by leveraging creativity, actions, and behaviors of the team members. More importantly, the synergistic results of the team CAN ONLY be accomplished by a committed and dedicated team of professionals. The Taylor Spine Team has been strategically assembled to meet the demands of injured spine patients. Our new team members (Kacey and Laura) have contributed immensely to our team atmosphere and worked to improve patient care. They have taken initiative to improve timely communication and ensure quality within our spine practice.



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It is necessary to continually measure team effectiveness. Methods to measure this include:

1. Extent which teams output (spine care) meets standards of quality and timeliness of users
2. Extent which team work enhances capability of team members to work interdependently
3. Extent which team contributes to growth and well-being of members and consumers.

At the Taylor Spine Team we uses these parameters to continue to increase the cohesiveness of our team, therefore improving patient care and communication with all involved parties.

Monday, June 5, 2017 from 8:45 AM – 10:00 AM I will be presenting a lecture at the 22nd Annual Missouri Workers' Compensation Conference at Tan-Tar-A Resort in Osage Beach, Missouri. The conference is scheduled Monday June 5, 2017 through Tuesday June 6, 2017.

The lecture will address Medicalization in workers compensation patients. Medicalization is defined as "the process by which some aspects of human life come to be considered medical problems, whereas before they were not considered pathological". As well in the lecture, I will discuss the opioid epidemic influenced by "The Decade of Pain". This time frame (2001-2011) is associated specifically with increased use of opioid pain medications. And finally, I will discuss the exaggerated pain behavior and ingrained pain response commonly seen in some workers compensation claimants. The exaggerated pain behavior can be evaluated through the physical exam and through psychological screening questionnaires such as the fear avoidance belief questionnaire, distress risk assessment model (DRAM), pain catastrophizing scale, and perceived injustice scale. At the Taylor Spine Team, we incorporate these modalities to identify confounding psychological overlay in spine claimants.

If you would like additional copies of this newsletter or a link to the Missouri work comp PowerPoint presentation please contact the office at 636-227-8226 or email jnewman@tccortho.com.

References

1. Brennan, Frank. "The US Congressional "Decade on Pain Control and Research" 2001-2011: A Review." *Journal of Pain and Palliative Care Pharmacotherapy* (2015): 212-27. Web.
2. Organizational Behavior and Management, 10th Edition, John M. Ivancevich, Robert Konopaske and Michael T. Matteson, McGraw-Hill Irwin Company