Opioid Stewardship in Queensland

The use of prescription opioids have been steadily increasing since the late 90’s in Australia with a threefold increase of PBS opioid prescriptions in Australia between 1992 to 2007.¹

The reasons for increase in use of these agents are multifactorial; ageing population, increase prevalence of chronic pain, inclusion of opiates in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) etc.

Opioid Stewardship (OS) is a systematic approach to managing opioid prescribing including appropriate use of opioids in pain management, improved patient education and improved clinical handover.

In 2017

2.5 million opioid prescriptions were made in Queensland

⁴ BMJ Study

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Prescription opioid related harms are increasing in an Australian context³

Every day in Australia,
- nearly 150 hospitalisations and
- 14 emergency department (ED) presentations involve opioid harm,
- and 3 people die from drug-induced deaths involving opioid use.
- In 2016, opioid deaths accounted for 62 per cent of all drug-induced deaths.

https://www.bmj.com/content/bmj/360/bmj.j5790.full.pdf
‘Opioid Stewardship’ in action

- Partnership between organisation, patient and community
- Rational prescribing
- Context sensitive
- Coordinated approach
- Multipronged interventions
- Facilitating quality improvement of overall pain management

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