



**Monday through Friday**  
8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.

**Saturdays & Holidays**  
9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

**Sundays & Christmas**  
Noon to 4:00 P.M.

## ***IT'S ABOUT PAIN***

A monthly service of Kirkpatrick Family Care

Vol 1, Number 1, September 2016

### **What Prescribers Are Doing to Help Solve the Problem**

Dear patients with chronic pain,

As you all know by now, Opioid Abuse has become a national issue. And whereas New York Times reporter Judy Foreman in *A NATION IN PAIN* (RANDOM HOUSE 2014) castigated doctors for UNDER PRESCRIBING narcotics to pain patients (hence denying them quality of life), now the pendulum has swung the other way—we are criticized for prescribing too many narcotics to too many patients.

The statistics are clear. Overdoses and suicides among young people are up, and illegal/recreational use of prescription opioids is currently considered the main cause, even though major social and psychologic issues no doubt contribute. This is separate from the problems of smuggled heroin and methamphetamine.

On the other hand, we treat a lot of patients who suffer from chronic pain. Almost all of them are enjoying a decent quality of life, and believe that without their medication, life would be awful.

So, we have dual concerns:

- 1) Helping reduce drug abuse, including suicide and overdoses; and
- 2) Helping our injured and sick patients to safely obtain relief of pain so they can continue to function and enjoy life.

Hence, we are publishing a newsletter to help you with both of these goals. We will provide a notebook in which you can file these monthly commentaries. We'll give you the current and any/all previous newsletters at your follow up appointments, or mail them to you, or (if you prefer) send them to your current/updated email address. We will also attach them to our website <Kirkpatrickfamilycare.com>.

Please feel free to discuss these issues with your Kirkpatrick Family Care Provider or send written comments to me.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Kirkpatrick, MD, FACP

Kirkpatrick Family Care