

29<sup>th</sup> July 2013

## IAEM PUBLISHES NEW GUIDELINES FOR THE ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF PAIN IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

The Irish Association for Emergency Medicine (IAEM) recently published [guidelines for the Emergency Department \(ED\) assessment and management of pain](#) in both children and adults.

Pain is the most common presenting symptom in EDs and pain management is one of the most important components of ED patient care. Emergency clinicians are involved in ongoing research to better understand patients' pain management needs and to develop ever more effective ways to care for patients who experience pain caused by illness or injury. In both pre-hospital and hospital-based care, emergency clinicians are trained to prioritise the recognition and alleviation of pain. Furthermore, pain assessment is included in the ED patient triage process that determines the priority for treatment based on the severity of a patient's condition.

Effective pain control is essential to good patient experiences of emergency care; however feedback from patients and international EM research evidence tell us that EDs don't always get pain management absolutely right, every time, for every patient. Delays in EDs caused by overcrowding with admitted inpatients can also be a significant barrier to optimal pain management.

The new guidelines will improve patient care by supporting a consistent 'best-evidence' approach to pain management in all EDs in Ireland. They are aligned to pain management recommendations from the College of Emergency Medicine outlined in their [Clinical Standards for Emergency Department](#) and will also support local quality improvement activities such as ED pain management audits.

Copies of these guidelines have been circulated to all EDs and the Association has placed a link to the documents on its website. The guidelines have been endorsed by the national Emergency Medicine Programme and will be officially launched at the [Annual Scientific Meeting of IAEM](#) which will take place in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal from 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

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