

APPENDIX H

Using the “PAINED” acronym to assist with pain assessment

A useful acronym that is useful for remembering the most common components of a pain assessment is PAINED:

- Place:** Site(s) of pain and any referral patterns and temporal patterns (constant, intermittent, incident and breakthrough).
- Amount:** Onset (acute or chronic), duration, intensity of pain (use standard scale) and the level of pain acceptable to the patient.
- Intensifiers:** Factors that exacerbate the pain, including associated symptoms (fatigue, nausea, constipation, anxiety and depression). If pain is absent at times, what triggers its return.
- Nullifiers:** Factors that relieve pain. This should include current and past history of OTC and prescription analgesic use and other therapies, their effectiveness and side effects.
- Effect:** Effectiveness of and side effects from current and past analgesics. Description of pain’s effect on activities of daily living, roles, ability to work, sleep, and eat. Effect on mood and ability to concentrate.
- Descriptor:** Description of the character of the pain (aching, throbbing, gnawing, burning, stabbing etc.).

The questions associated with each letter in the acronym do not need to be asked in any particular order. Using this acronym in conjunction with a thorough pain history will greatly facilitate achieving a pain diagnosis and pain-related plan of care.

(Adapted from Brigham and Women’s Hospital Pain Management Standard of Care)