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NP Expanded Scope

Nurse practitioners (NPs) play significant roles in several of our facilities. They have had broad prescribing rights, with one important restriction, at least until now. They have not been authorized to order narcotics or other controlled medications. As a result, they have been very limited in their ability to treat pain. This has been particularly troubling in palliative situations, where timeliness of pain control is our overarching concern.

This one critical area has now been addressed. NPs have access to on-line, webinar or face to face courses that, upon completion, allow them to be certified to prescribe controlled substances. Facilities and pharmacies can confirm that the certification has been attained by selecting the "Find a Nurse" option on the CNO website. NPs with restrictions, such as those not entitled to prescribe controlled substances are identified there.

Written narcotic prescriptions must carry the same complete information required by any prescriber. Beyond basic

resident/patient/prescriber ID and order details, the quantity to be dispensed must be clearly shown. NPs provide an extra layer of support to the health care team, and can now help across the treatment spectrum, especially in situations where physician availability is limited.

geriatrx.com

A few months ago we decided to beef up the GeriatRx website. This process has led to a complete redesign of the site (kind of like a small fixup job that turned into a major renovation). We are getting ready for the official unveiling early next month.

All current functionality and documentation access has been retained, and user names and passwords also remain unchanged. These credentials give the user access to valuable clinical resource tools, such as our *Pneumonia Checklist*, *Parkinsonian Symptom Tracking* and *End of Life Order Set* documents. Access information should be posted in every unit of each of our facilities. If you cannot find your access credentials, please contact us and we will provide them to you.

We will also be introducing a second level of access, for Directors of Care. This "platinum" level of access will allow DOCs to download all their monthly, quarterly and

annual statistical reports, including graphs and charts from PAC meetings. Quality Assurance Nursing Audits will also be available from this area of the site. These documents can all be downloaded through the *Client Web Portal*. Facility consultant pharmacists will contact each DOC individually, to provide their login credentials as well as a quick in-service on navigating through these new offerings.

Another interesting feature of the site is the addition of a *GeriJournal* "search" option. You will now be able to do a keyword search of over 125 *GeriJournal* newsletters. For example, a search of the drug "Xarelto" captures nine *GeriJournals*, dating back to June of 2009. A search of "seizure" brings up eleven newsletters, starting in May 2007. I find this very exciting, although I may be a bit biased.

Noroxin is Back

Norfloxacin (Noroxin) had been on back order for the better part of 2016. It is available once again, but has seen scant usage, likely because it didn't make much of a splash on its return. Norfloxacin should not be ignored for UTI treatment! Though bladder concentrations are high, serum levels are relatively low, so QT effects, tendon rupture, dizziness and confusion are less likely than with its quinolone cousins.

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