

South West Regional Wound Care Toolkit

B.5.3 WHO Pain Ladder with Pain Management Guidelines

The WHO Pain Ladder was developed in 1986 as a conceptual model to guide the management of cancer pain. There is now a worldwide consensus promoting its use for the medical management of all pain associated with serious illness,

including pain from wounds. Severe Pain Red Flags 7 - 10 / 10 Unrelieved pain should raise a red flag that attracts the attention of Step 3: the interdisciplinary team. Start strong oral opioid – "around the clock" Morphine 5-10mg q4h titrate to pain Dilaudid 1-4 mg q4h titrate to pain MS-Contin or other long acting 30-60mg q8-12 h Fentanyl 25 yg/hour plus Morphine Sulphate 5 mg. q 2 hours for breakthrough - *never to be administered to opioid naive clients + Adjuvants* Pain persisting or Notes: Use short acting preparation of same medication for breakthrough pain. Consider lower dose in opioid naïve increasing **Moderate Pain** and elderly patients 4 - 6 / 10Step 2: Add Opioid for Moderate Pain - "around the clock" 2 Acetaminophen 325mg + codeine 30mg q4h (Tylenol #3) or Acetaminophen 325mg + codeine 60mg q4h (Tylenol #4) or Acetaminophen 325/500mg + oxycodone 5mg q4h (Percocet / Roxicet) + Adjuvants* Note: Consider stronger opioid if pain not controlled by these combinations at a total daily dose if 400mg/day of codeine or 80mg/day of oxycodone Pain persisting or Mild Pain increasing 1 - 3 / 10Step 1: Non-narcotic - "around the clock" ' Acetaminophen 650mg q4h or

- ASA 650mg q4h or
- Ibuprofen 400mg q4h or
- other NSAIDs
- + Adjuvants*
- * Adjuvant therapy medications that can help to enhance the effects of non-opioid and opioid analgesics
- 1) NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatories) can be used as co-analgesics and are useful in reducing inflammation
- 2) Tricyclic anti-depressants Nortriptyline, Desipramine, and Amitriptyline are options, although Amitriptyline can cause confusion in the elderly. Studies have confirmed their effectiveness in treating diabetic neuropathy and neuropathic pain from other sources
- 3) Anticonvulsant medications Gabapentin, Pregabalin, and Carbamazepine can relieve the shooting, electrical pains of peripheral nerve dysfunction.iii

ⁱ World Health Organization,(2009). WHO's Pain Relief Ladder. <u>www.who.int/cancer/palliative/painladder/en/</u>

² Roden, A. & Sturman, E.(2009). Assessment & Management of patients with wound-related pain. *Nursing Standard*, 23(45) 53-62

³ Principles of best practice: Minimizing pain at wound dressing-related procedures. A consensus document. (2007). Toronto, Ontario, Canada: c WoundPedia Inc.