

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

Compliance & Clinical News

Looking for help in providing residents the pain medication they require without running afoul of DEA requirements in nursing homes? Check out a tip sheet compiled by medical societies, including the American Medical Directors Association and the American Geriatrics Society.

"The tip sheet was developed in light of recent enforcement actions by Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents," according to a press statement. "The tip sheet stresses that under current law, a prescriber must write the prescription him or herself," states the release. The tips include the following:

- "Always carry a prescription pad that meets your state's requirements.
- Know what information is required for a controlled substance prescription to be legal.
- Write your prescriptions at a facility with a fax machine and fax the prescription to the provider pharmacy rather than calling it in.
- Purchase a home fax for after-hour and weekend calls.
- In emergency situations when you are unable to fax a script, or do not have a prescription pad available, call the pharmacist directly and provide him or her with the order, in addition to providing it to the nurse."

Read the press release at www.americangeriatrics.org/press/id:1128/. You can download the tip sheet at www.americangeriatrics.org/files/documents/tip_sheet_fly.pdf.

A study by Mayo Clinic sheds some light on potential differences in how men and women transition from mild cognitive impairment (MCI) to dementia. The researchers evaluated a random sample of Olmsted County, Minn residents aged 70 to 89 years in 2004. They used the "Clinical Dementia Rating Scale, a neurologic evaluation, and neuropsychological testing to assess four cognitive domains: memory, executive function, language, and visuospatial skills," according to an abstract of the study published in a 2010 issue of *Neurology*.

Findings: The researchers found that MCI increased with age, with men showing a higher prevalence than women.

Conclusions: The "study suggests that approximately 16 percent of elderly subjects free of dementia are affected by MCI, and amnesic MCI is the most common type. The higher prevalence of MCI in men may suggest that women transition from normal cognition directly to dementia at a later age but more abruptly," the researchers state.

Read the abstract at www.neurology.org/cgi/content/abstract/75/10/889.