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## Students, faculty participate in second annual Interprofessional Workshop on Opioid Abuse

With the goal of curbing the nation's growing opioid epidemic, students in Oakland University's School of Health Sciences, School of Nursing and Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine gathered in the Oakland Center Banquet Rooms to take part in the university's second annual Interprofessional Workshop on Opioid Abuse.

The event was designed to help participants become more familiar with recent government legislation and guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control regarding opioid use, and to highlight non-opioid pain management strategies.

"Our goal for this event is to bring students and professionals from different health care specialties together to discuss how we can optimize patient care – especially as it relates to preventing opioid abuse," said Deb Doherty, PT, Ph.D., an associate professor with the Physical Therapy Program at Oakland. "We want to help the students from the four disciplines of medicine, nursing, physical therapy and public health to focus on the importance of interprofessional practice and shared decision making. This is true patient-centered care and is essential to help mitigate this problem."

The workshop began with a talk from keynote speaker Walid Harb, M.D., FACP, an internist at Beaumont Hospital, Dearborn. He discussed various issues surrounding opioids, emphasizing the need to educate patients and adhere to protocols when prescribing opioids and other treatments.

"We can't be afraid to say no (to prescribing opioids)" he said. "It's okay to say no when it's not safe for the patient, it's not safe for us, or it's beyond what we are comfortable with prescribing."

Opioids include drugs such as hydrocodone (Vicodin) and oxycodone (Percocet), and can be highly addictive. Dr. Harb noted that recent legislation has made it mandatory for medical professionals to talk to patients about the risks of addiction when opioids are prescribed. He said that while some people may think they can't get addicted, the reality is that "everybody has the potential to become an addict in the right situation."

Opioid abuse continues to be among the nation's worst public health crises, with the Trump Administration recently declaring it a national public health emergency. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reported that in 2016, **116 people died each day from opioid-related drug overdoses**. The epidemic is particularly troublesome in Michigan: state data show that from 1999-2015, **the number of opioid-related deaths increased 13-fold**.

The keynote speech was followed by a panel discussion highlighting multi-disciplinary intervention options to limit the use of prescription opioids. The panel was moderated by Stephen Loftus, Ph.D., OUWB associate professor of medical education, and was composed of four health professionals:



*Students and faculty from OU's School of Health Sciences, School of Nursing and Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine took part in a workshop devoted to curbing opioid abuse and exploring non-opioid pain management strategies.*



*Keynote speaker Walid Harb, M.D., an internist at Beaumont Hospital, Dearborn.*

- Judith Fouladbakhsh, Ph.D., RN, Associate Professor, School of Nursing
- Sarah Lerchenfeldt, Pharm.D., BCPS, BCOP, Assistant Professor of Biomedical Sciences (pharmacology specialty), Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine
- Sheala Jafry, M.D. (family medicine specialty), Beaumont Hospital, Troy

After the panel discussion, students were presented with a case study involving a typical patient in a clinical setting and were tasked with coming up with an intervention plan. Each group consisted of graduate students from the School of Nursing, School of Health Sciences and Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine, along with a faculty facilitator.

Here's what students had to say about the interprofessional workshop:

"The medical community must come to a consensus so there are not contradictory messages coming from different healthcare providers," said Jeffrey Jackson, a student in the Oakland University-Beaumont Graduate Program of Nurse Anesthesia. "Health professionals must recognize that all members of the healthcare team are important to achieve the goal of mitigating the opioid crisis."

Joseph Adamson, a second-year OUWB student, said the case study helped illustrate the purpose of interprofessional healthcare teams.

"The PT students brought up issues of posture and sleep positioning that I would have likely never considered. The nursing students raised issues about family logistics and discharge planning that weren't the first things to cross my mind. I raised concerns about the depression/anxiety screening, as well as taking a more comprehensive medical history," he said.

"Together, we covered nearly every aspect of the patient's life, presentation and potential needs in a fraction of the time it would have taken me if I were working by myself."

Fadi Anwar, a second-year Doctor of Physical Therapy student, said he would apply what he learned from the workshop to improve patients' quality of life.

"The knowledge I gained from the workshop will help me build rapport and trust of my patients as I provide them with alternative pain management interventions," he said. "In doing so, I hope to equip them with the tools necessary to decrease opioid dependency and fear of pain, as they regain functional independence and improve their overall quality of life."

Desirae Jemison, a master of public health student at Oakland, worked on the [Oakland County Health Division Opioid Initiative](#) for her practical last summer. She said, "The



Pictured from left: Panel Moderator Stephen Loftus, Ph.D., and panelists John Krauss, Ph.D., PT; Sheala Jafry, M.D.; Judith Fouladbakhsh, Ph.D., RN; and Sarah Lerchenfeldt, Pharm.D., BCPS, BCOP.



Participants are shown discussing a patient case study.



going on for quite a long time. Events like this are important because we need to keep raising awareness and making sure people know how opioids can affect them.”

The Oakland University Interprofessional Education Task Force, which is composed of faculty from the School of Health Sciences, School of Nursing and Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine, organized the workshop. Funding and support for the workshop was provided by the OU School of Health Sciences Seed Grant; Theta Psi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau (Honor Society of Nursing); Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine; and Graduate School Physical Therapy Association.



*Fadi Anwar*



*Desirae Jemison*