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# Chronic Pain

## **PART 2: PHARMACOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT and REVIEW OF PATIENTS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Chronic non-cancer pain is a common condition with a quoted prevalence of 1 in 4 adults in the UK, the majority of whom are managed in primary care. Patients with chronic pain consult more often and it is estimated that 1 in 5 GP consultations relate to an aspect of chronic pain.

There is increasing debate regarding the use of opioids in chronic pain and the risk/benefit ratio of those drugs. GPs' concerns include iatrogenic drug addiction and the selling of prescribed weak opioids and anti-convulsants. Thus there is a reluctance by GPs to manage chronic pain by continuously increasing the doses of strong opioids.

This module aims to address:

- Pharmacological treatment options for neuropathic and non-neuropathic chronic pain
- The role of opioid drugs will be discussed extensively, as this was felt to be a major problem by the GPs that defined the aims of the module
- How to review patients with chronic pain

There is a second Chronic Pain PBSGL module, Chronic Pain Part 1, which studies the same cases but looks at assessment and self-management. Groups may find it useful to study each module at subsequent meetings. The authors acknowledge that practice clinicians do not split their clinical thought processes in this way. However the topic had to be split into two parts due to the complexity of the issues that arise.