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| Management of chronic non-cancer pain patients in primary care |
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| Master thesis in Medicine |
| Introduction  Chronic non-cancer pain is a highly prevalent health issue with personal and societal consequences. Patients suffering from CNCP are mainly cared for by primary care physicians. There is a multitude of available treatment options, however, research shows that PCPs still perceive treating chronic pain as difficult.  Research objective  To explore how primary care physicians in Switzerland manage patients with chronic non-cancer pain, specifically what their reasons for prescribing certain treatments are.  Methods  A qualitative design using semi-structured interviews that were thematically analysed. Ten primary care physicians were interviewed.  Results  Four categories were identified:  - Investigation of chronic pain  - Primary care physicians' perceived role  - Perceived patients' & system determinants  - Prescribing a treatment  The categories were closely interconnected. Overall, PCPs had individual opinions and perceptions that shaped the management of chronic pain patients.  Conclusion  In general, primary care physicians are aware of the complexity of chronic pain and the importance of the patient-provider relationship. To further improve the management of chronic pain patients, PCPs need a broad medical knowledge and a multidisciplinary professional network. Increasing awareness of their own perceptions and how these influence the management might be beneficial. PCPs already take into account patients’ resources and limits of the health care systems’ reimbursement for therapies. These aspects should be considered in future guidelines. To gain further insight on the subject, the patients’ point of view should be explored to find out whether they match the PCPs’ perceptions. |
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