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IHI/NPSF Project Seeks to Improve the Assessment and Management of Acute Pain

Support from Pacira provides for the development of a tool to advance safe pain management solutions in inpatient and emergency department settings

Boston, MA, September 14, 2017—The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), which merged with the National Patient Safety Foundation (NPSF) in May, has received support from Pacira Pharmaceuticals, Inc., to develop a tool to help reduce harm to patients from the over administering of opioids to treat acute pain. The tool will specifically address patients being treated in inpatient and emergency department settings.

“Pain management and related opioid safety issues have become a critical threat to public health. While a number of public and private agencies are committed to advancing safe opioid management practices and have developed resources accordingly, much of this work has focused on the management of chronic pain,” said Tejal K. Gandhi, MD, MPH, CPPS, Chief Clinical and Safety Officer, IHI. “The goal of this project is to provide safety and clinical leaders with guidelines about the best processes to safely manage acute pain.”

As part of the project, IHI/NPSF will convene a group of experts across disciplines, including patient safety, clinical leadership, orthopedics, anesthesiology, medication safety, and hospital pharmacy, among others, to develop an acute pain safety assessment and intervention tool to help health professionals more safely prescribe and manage opioids. System design and process issues will be addressed, as well as IT system alerts, metrics, and various other elements of safe opioid management.

The problems associated with opioids to control acute pain are multifaceted. For example, [one study](#) found that, with some common surgical procedures, patients given opioids for the first time in the postsurgical period are at increased risk of chronic opioid overuse. [Recent research](#) also found that opioid-related adverse drug events occur in 11 percent of patients, with those over 65 years of age or with certain chronic conditions or prior opioid use being at greatest risk.

“The connection between postsurgical opioid prescribing and the potential for adverse events, including long-term use, addiction, and dependence, is clear,” said Dave Stack, CEO and Chairman of Pacira. “Pacira is proud to support the development and promotion of this critical resource for pain management safety. Most important, we are pleased to contribute to advancing the understanding, awareness, and utilization of multimodal strategies that include nonopioid options to improve patient care.”

The new acute pain safety assessment and intervention tool is meant to supplement and complement work already being undertaken by The Joint Commission, the Food and Drug Administration, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Institute for Safe Medication Practices, and others.

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About Us

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) and the National Patient Safety Foundation (NPSF) began working together as one organization in May 2017. The newly formed entity is committed to using its combined knowledge and resources to focus and energize the patient safety agenda in order to build systems of safety across the continuum of care. To learn more about our trainings, resources, and practical applications, visit ihi.org/PatientSafety.

About Pacira

Pacira Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (NASDAQ: PCRX) is a specialty pharmaceutical company focused on the clinical and commercial development of new products that meet the needs of acute care practitioners and their patients. The company's flagship product, EXPAREL® (bupivacaine liposome injectable suspension), indicated for single-dose infiltration into the surgical site to produce postsurgical analgesia, was commercially launched in the United States in April 2012. EXPAREL and two other products have successfully utilized DepoFoam®, a unique and proprietary product delivery technology that encapsulates drugs without altering their molecular structure, and releases them over a desired period of time. Additional information about Pacira is available at www.pacira.com.