



# News Release

Contact:  
**Jason Parent**  
Development and  
College Relations Office  
33 Edgemont Drive  
Presque Isle, ME 04769  
Phone: (207) 768-2808  
Fax: (207) 760-1101  
jparent@nmcc.edu

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## **NMCC host site for April 16 Northern Maine Pain Symposium**

**Aroostook County** - A day-long symposium for health care workers, educators, students and area residents focusing on pain and pain management will be offered at Northern Maine Community College on Thursday, April 16, in the Edmunds Conference Center.

The fourth annual Northern Maine Pain Symposium will bring together medical professionals and those preparing to enter the field from throughout the region, as well as patients and family members of individuals who live with pain. The conference is a program of the Maine Hospice Council and Center for End-of-Life Care and sponsored by Endo Pharmaceuticals.

Centered on the theme of “Leadership and Quality in Pain Management: What is Your Responsibility?” the conference will feature state- and nationally-recognized experts in the area of pain management. Topics of the sessions offered will include the importance of role models in health care, caring for the child at the end of life, chronic pain management, assessing and managing pain in the older population, and pain management and quality of life for Veterans. The day will conclude with a panel discussion featuring the day’s speakers talking about the importance of making a commitment to quality.

Among the presenters will be Dr. Craig Hurwitz, who serves as the director of clinical development at Reata Pharmaceuticals in Dallas, Texas. Hurwitz has connections to Maine and previously held the position of director of the Maine Children’s Cancer Program at Portland-based Maine Medical Center. Dr. Ira Mandel, who serves as the medical director of Kno-Wal-Lin Hospice and medical director at Health Connections, a program for the PenBay Department of Occupational Health in Camden, will also lead one of the sessions.

Other portions of the program will be lead by Larry Hills, a nurse practitioner for Kno-Wal-Lin Hospice in Camden; Katielynn Spaziano, the hospice and palliative care nurse at the Togus VA Medical Center in Augusta; Mark McKenna, the administrator for the Maine Veterans Home in Caribou; and Kandyce Powell, executive director of the Maine Hospice Council and Maine Center for End-of-Life Care.

Among the participants at the conference will be students enrolled in the associate degree nursing program at Northern Maine Community College and students enrolled in the bachelor of science in nursing degree at the University of Maine at Fort Kent. The NMCC senior nursing students have been fund-raising over the past several months to help defray the cost of registration so all students can participate and take advantage of the expertise shared by the accomplished professionals in the field of pain management.

“Quality pain management is an on-going issue, and a huge problem in the health care setting, even today, with so many options available. It is important that the graduate nurses understand pain and the importance of treating the pain to enhance healing, improve the quality of life, or ease one’s suffering as they approach the end of life. The nurse is taught to be an advocate, and is often the one providing the pain management,” said Janet Durgin, NMCC part-time nursing instructor and one of the conference organizers. “Our students will gain a wealth of information by attending this symposium. We are so pleased to be able to offer it on our campus.”

The Northern Maine Pain Symposium will begin with registration and continental breakfast on April 16 at 8:30 a.m. and run through 4:00 p.m.

Individual registration for the conference is \$79, and \$35 for students. The fee includes the cost of all conference materials, continental breakfast, buffet lunch, and break refreshments. Seating is limited and participants are encouraged to register before April 11 by going to [www.maineospicecouncil.org](http://www.maineospicecouncil.org) or calling 1-800-438-5963.

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