Problem: Project team explored current best practices regarding assessment of pain and geriatric-specific assessment tools. Since ineffective pain control is a major quality of life factor for geriatric patients, pain control is imperative.

Evidence: Comfort and relief of pain are essential to nursing practice. A consistent, proactive approach should be utilized. "Recent research shows that health care providers have many weaknesses and that pain continues to be undertreated". 1 Research studies suggest that incorporation of multidimensional facets of pain assessment and management provides best care and improves the quality of life for aging patients. Myths of ageism, pain regarded as a symbol of weakness, fear of addiction or dependence, and pain as a normal part of the aging process are dispelled. Literature suggests that geriatric patients are more receptive to the Faces Pain Scale-Revised (FPS-R) 2 rather than the Wong-Baker Faces Scale. 3

Strategies:

- Review pain assessment and management policy. Examine tools in current literature and determine if current practice is evidence-based (EB)
- Assess knowledge and skill in assessing and managing pain through online survey
- Develop EB educational program for nursing staff
- Create and distribute a pain assessment tool for appropriate pain assessment
- Distribute post-intervention online survey to nursing staff

Practice Change:

- Collaborated to implement a policy and practice change utilizing an EB culturally diverse pain assessment tool.
- Secured authors’ permission to incorporate the copyrighted tool into policy.
- Created and distributed brochure and a geriatric-appropriate pain assessment tool.

Evaluation: Pre-intervention online survey completed by over 660 nurses. Preliminary data analysis highlighted discrepancies that exist in current practice compared to EB best practices.

Results: Further evaluation will be conducted after the post-intervention online survey is distributed, aggregated and analyzed.

Recommendation: Providing staff with valid pain assessment tools is important to improve pain assessment in older persons.

Lessons Learned: Collaboration and hard work armed with current evidence bring about success.
Bibliography:

1. Pasero and McCaffery, 2004
2. Hicks, 2001
3. Wong and Baker, 1988