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## *Advisory Committee Update*

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*Date: 9/13/23*

*Subject: Persistent Pain*

September is Pain Awareness Month. According to the CDC, almost 21% of the American population deal with chronic pain. The CDC also reports that people who face health disparities have higher risk for developing persistent pain.

Research has been expanding world wide regarding persistent pain. One thing we know that is it is very complex and very difficult to manage. The IASP (International Association for the Study of Pain) has changed the definition of persistent pain to the following “An unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with, or resembling that associated with, actual or potential tissue damage. Pain is always a personal experience that is influenced to varying degrees by biological, psychological, and social factors. A person’s report of an experience as pain should be respected. Although pain usually serves an adaptive role, it may have adverse effects on function and social and psychological well-being.”

VMG offered a multidisciplinary shared medical appointment for people living with persistent pain. During the 10-week series of appointments, we incorporate behavioral health theory and practice, incorporate movement and sensations other pain, medications, nutrition, sleep, and most of all a space for pain patients to feel heard and respected. Almost all of our patients through out the multiple sessions thus far and commented on being seen and heard as something more than their pain. They are also making great connections with each other and creating their own support network, another important aspect of persistent pain treatment. Living with persistent pain can lead to depression, isolation, social anxiety and disconnected with family, society and the healthcare system.

Persistent pain treatment relies on trust, a good relationship between the patient and provider and a lot of reassurance and some creativity. The goal for these patients is really to help them change their relationship with their pain and take some control back, dial down the intensity of their pain. There are a lot of pain resources available in the communities. A number of them are listed on the intranet page. Please feel free to reach out if you know of any that are not included or if you have any questions.

Thank you

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