



HSO and SKIP release the first Pediatric Pain Management Standard

Ottawa – April 3, 2023 – Today, Solutions for Kids in Pain (SKIP) and the Health Standards Organization (HSO) are pleased to announce Canada’s first Pediatric Pain Management Standard, providing guidance to health organizations on how to deliver equitable and quality pain management across hospital settings.

Access to effective pain management is a fundamental human right and a crucial aspect of care delivery but is often overlooked. Children are experiencing preventable and untreated pain in Canada. All children experience pain (such as from medical procedures or accidents), and one in five children will experience chronic pain before adulthood. Children who have chronic pain are more likely to experience mental illness, substance use, and socioeconomic disparities into adulthood.

“Most pain care for children in Canada is woefully out of date. Implementing this new health standard can ensure that every child seen in hospital receives effective and personalized pain care, based on current evidence-informed solutions.” — Dr. Katie Birnie, clinical psychologist, Associate Scientific Director of SKIP, and Chair of the standard’s Working Group.

This new standard is the first of its kind globally, establishing a set of guidelines for the delivery of pain management for children from birth to 19 years. The standard acknowledges and takes into account systemic factors that contribute to health inequities, exacerbating the experience of pain in children, including racism and trauma.

“Ensuring access to the right pain care at the right time is the right thing to do for Canadian children, and this standard provides the guidance needed to achieve that. It’s about working with the systems and processes that already exist within hospitals and continuously improving them so that children are not experiencing preventable pain.” — Dr. Régis Vaillancourt, Chair of the HSO Medication Management Technical Committee.

The standard outlines 34 specific recommendations on how to deliver equitable, evidence-informed, and person-centered pain care and supports. It recognizes that children and families are equal members of the health team, actively involved in discussions and decision-making about their pain care. It focuses on how Canadian organizational leaders and health teams should provide care and address untreated and unmanaged pain as a patient safety incident.

This work was made possible due to the contributions of people with lived experience and the expertise of SKIP members and HSO’s Pediatric Pain Management Working



Group and Medication Management Technical Committee. This Pediatric Pain Management standard aligns with the [Canadian Pain Task Force recommendation](#) to develop national pain management standards, ensuring all people in Canada have access to consistent pain care and supports.

To support the implementation of the Pediatric Pain Management standard, HSO and SKIP are pleased to invite interested parties to the Virtual Town Hall taking place on Thursday, April 20, 2023, from 12:30-2:00 pm EDT. This will be an opportunity to learn more about the standard content and participate in a question-and-answer session.

Register [here](#) for the Virtual Town Hall, and visit [HSO's e-store](#) for more information and to access the new Pediatric Pain Management Standard.

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