

# “What Does A Community Pharmacist Do?”

*SCOPE of Pain Colleague to Colleague Podcast #20*

Welcome back to the *SCOPE of Pain* micro case series. This is Dr. Daniel Alford, Professor of Medicine and Course Director for the Boston University School of Medicine's *SCOPE of Pain* Program.

In this episode, I'll be speaking with Dr. Daniel Alford, a primary care physician and an addiction medicine specialist at Boston Medical Center, and on faculty at Boston University School of Medicine. And with Dr. Patrick Kelly, a pharmacist on faculty at the University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy, about how prescribers and community pharmacists can work together to improve care of patients on opioid therapy for pain.

A clinician receives a telephone call from a pharmacist, the clinician's patient is at the pharmacy to pick up a new prescription for opioids for chronic back pain, but the pharmacist is concerned about the diagnosis and the appropriate dosing. How much information should the pharmacist have before filling a prescription?

The pharmacist has to make use of what is available to them, particularly, that's going to be past fill history, insurance claims data (if they have that), and the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, looking at that, looking at that patient's fill in the state they reside in, maybe even border states, trying to get a full picture holistically of what is going on with this individual.

In addition to that, the pharmacist is going to be looking at the patient themselves, looking for behavioral cues that might be worrisome. Is there a pattern of early fills? Is there a pattern of high doses? Is there a pattern of obtaining medications for the same thing from multiple prescribers? All of this can help paint a picture for the pharmacist, and that's also examining the actual prescription itself...is there an indication on there? Do we know what we're actually treating, and does this all make sense? Pharmacists are drug experts, they know these medications inside and out, so knowing what we're treating can help a pharmacist figure out, "Okay, is this product appropriate for the situation at hand?"

Thanks for listening. You're not alone in facing these challenging issues. This topic is addressed in detail in the *SCOPE of Pain* program, available in online and podcast formats, where you can earn CME, CE, and CPE credits. Visit [mycme.com/pages/opioid-cme](http://mycme.com/pages/opioid-cme).



School of Medicine