

## University of Iowa Center of Excellence in Pain Education

In September 2015, the University of Iowa was named as one of eleven **NIH Centers of Excellence in Pain Education (CoEPE)**. In the 2011 Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report *Relieving Pain in America*, an urgency related to improving pain education for undergraduate and graduate students was established as one strategy to address the healthcare system's deficiencies in managing pain. The creation of CoEPEs addresses this national need to improve pain education. According to NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins, "Virtually all health professionals are called upon to help patients suffering from pain. These new centers will translate current research findings about pain management to fill what have been recognized as gaps in curricula so clinicians in all fields can work with their patients to make better and safer choices about pain treatment."

The initial award to the University is \$77,871, with a maximum award of \$914,562 over 5 years. The final award amount will be determined by the number of modules the project team and National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) choose to execute. The UI CoEPE case development team will include pain experts from Nursing, Medicine, Pharmacy, Public Health, Social Work, Dentistry and Psychology.

### What is the goal of the CoEPE?

The goal of the CoEPE initiative of the NIH Pain Consortium is to develop enduring e-learning pain modules as training and educational resources for medical, dental, nursing, mental health, physical therapy, pharmacy, and other health professions to advance the assessment, diagnosis and safe treatment of pain. Other goals are to implement, evaluate and disseminate educational advancements.

### Which schools were designated as CoEPEs?

The 2015 CoEPE awardees are the [University of Iowa](#), University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of California, San Francisco, Harvard University, University of Connecticut, Johns Hopkins University, University of Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh, University of Rochester, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and the University of Washington.

### How are the CoEPEs Funded?

As part of the CoEPE initiative, the University of Iowa College of Nursing was awarded a contract from the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#) (NIDA) at the [NIH](#) to support the development of pain education curriculum resources and make them available through a repository on the [NIH Pain Consortium](#) website.

### Who is leading the UI CoEPE?

The PI Dr. [Keela Herr](#) and the UI CON will partner with co-PIs Drs. [Kathleen Sluka](#) (College of Medicine-Physical Therapy) and [Tanya Uden-Holman](#) (College of Public Health) and the [Iowa Institute for Public Health Practice](#), as well as an interdisciplinary team of experts in pain education and research across campus.

### What are the main activities of the UI CoEPE?

Case based interactive e-learning modules will be developed and integrated into student learning at Iowa through Interprofessional Education activities and within curricula of the health professional schools at Iowa.

### How will the UI CoEPE intersect with Interprofessional Education at UI?

The UI CoEPE is well-positioned to ensure interprofessional uptake of the proposed pain education modules through the well-articulated infrastructure of its [Interprofessional Education \(IPE\) Program](#). Guided by the UI Health Sciences Colleges Interprofessional Education [Steering Committee](#) that is chaired by Dr. Tanya Uden-Holman (co-PI on this application), IPE involves all five of the health sciences colleges ([Nursing](#), [Medicine](#), [Dentistry](#), [Pharmacy](#) and [Public Health](#)) at the University of Iowa and builds on the highly collaborative culture of the UI campus and current interprofessional education activities. Students participating in interprofessional course activities will complete identified pain modules and engage in follow-up discussions and evaluation of outcomes.

### What activities are currently underway for the UI CoEPE?

Development of the first case is currently under way. Lead Case Developer, Dr. Dana Dailey, is a PhD-prepared scientist in the Department of [Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Sciences](#). Dr. Dailey is working with an interprofessional team to assemble the content for the first content packaged assigned to the UI CoEPE, a scenario titled “Acute Injury Farm Accident with Chronic Pain.” The final content package will consist of an interactive case-based pain education scenario that will be delivered to the NIH Pain Consortium for translation to an electronic format. The cases developed by all of the CoEPEs will be available for free to all health profession schools and faculty through the NIH Pain Consortium web resource.

Meanwhile, Dr. Tanya Uden-Holman is working with the UI Interprofessional Education Steering Committee to develop a plan for implementing and evaluating the effectiveness of the case module developed at Iowa, as well as integrating additional case modules available through the combined CoEPE work in student education at Iowa.

For more information or to become involved with the UI CoEPE, please contact **Dr. Keela Herr** ([keela-herr@uiowa.edu](mailto:keela-herr@uiowa.edu)).

*The CoEPE Initiative is sponsored by the Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), National Center for Complementary and Integrate Health (NCCIH), National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR), National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR), National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), National Institute on Aging (NIA), Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) and the Office of Research on Women’s Health (ORWH).*