



The Foundation for Medical Excellence in cooperation with  
the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC presents

**THE 38th ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN  
SAFE PRACTICE MANAGEMENT**

# Prescribing SMARTer

Safer Care with **M**inimal Medications and **A**ppropriate and **R**ational **T**reatment

April 10, 2026  
8 a.m. to 4 p.m. PST  
Via Zoom Events

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## Program Details



Elevate your clinical skills and develop new confidence in managing patient requests with this innovative hybrid training. Go **beyond the basics** of opiate and anxiolytic prescribing and explore how to navigate the complexity of patient requests for these overvalued medications, and the multi-dimensional impact the usage of these drugs can have on a patient's life.



This training will provide valuable skills for clinicians, administrators, and regulators interested in the management of complex medical conditions. We believe clinical practice is best implemented in a system. Consider attending as a **clinical team**: physicians, nurse practitioners, administrators, pharmacists, medical assistants, and behavioural health consultants.



The focus of this program is on managing requests for medications that may be desired but are often unnecessary or dangerous. It includes **four one-hour asynchronous presentations** discussing approaches to appropriate prescribing, and a **one-day virtual conference** where subject matter experts will dive into the nuances of reconciling patient requests with prescribing best practices. The required virtual session will model the clinic setting and will include clinical interviews with standardized "patients."



This program has been certified by the College of Family Physicians of Canada. Participants are eligible for up to **9 Mainpro+ credits**.

[Register](#) >

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## Objectives

This course is designed to assist clinicians in successfully managing patients with chronic pain, anxiety, adult residual attention deficit disorder (ADHD), and substance use. These issues impact multiple dimensions of a patient's life.

The conference assumes that clinicians have the fundamentals of prescribing opioids, sedatives, stimulants, and antimicrobials. The lectures will not focus on the science of these medications or the conditions they treat, but rather on the patient's desire for these drugs. The program will help clinicians recognize limits and set mutual goals of care with patients to better address their pain and distress.

### Overall objectives

- Build knowledge regarding the effective treatment of complex medical conditions
- Employ tools for assessing risk in prescribing a variety of medications overvalued by patients
- Practice interview skills for this challenging group of patients
- Develop awareness of personal factors that influence effectiveness and impact practitioner well-being

### Small group objectives

- Apply a verbal limit to three or more repeated requests for prescriptions that are unsafe or unnecessary
- Practice making an "empathetic bridging" statement in response to expressed anger or distress
- Use "teach back" language with "patients" (actors) to check for understanding of shared information and plan

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## Presenters



**Kevin Afra**, MD, MHA, FRCPC, completed medical school and internal medicine at the University of Calgary, followed by an infectious diseases subspecialty at UBC. Kevin went on to obtain a Master of Health Administration from UBC. Kevin is currently the executive medical director of Antimicrobial Stewardship and Infection Control in Fraser Health. His clinical infectious diseases practice spans several Fraser Health hospitals. He is site principal investigator for several clinical trials at Surrey Memorial Hospital. He is a Clinical Assistant Professor with UBC and lead for sepsis week in the second-year medical school.



**Andrea Matsumura**, MD, MS, FACP, attended medical school at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio. She moved to Portland, Oregon for her residency in internal medicine and was an internal medicine physician with Northwest Permanente for 13 years before entering her fellowship in sleep medicine. She attended Oregon Health and Science University as a fellow in sleep medicine and is now a partner at the Oregon Clinic in pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine. Currently, she is a member of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine's (AASM) public awareness advisory committee and the AASM's public awareness task force leader for Sleep is Good Medicine campaign. In addition, she is a member of the JEDI committee (justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion) for the Oregon Medical Association (OMA) whose goal is to review and guide the activities of the OMA through this lens. She is a board member of the OMA's foundation which supports and mentors medical and physician assistant students. She is also the physician chair of strategic planning committee for The Oregon Clinic and serves on their DE+I committee. Dr. Matsumura describes herself as a holistic sleep medicine physician since the entire mind and body are affected by poor quality or lack of sleep. She enjoys public speaking on all things sleep and has been a guest speaker for Girls, Inc., the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, Providence Hospital System, numerous podcasts, and has been quoted in several articles about sleep and wellness.

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**Dr. Karen Shklanka**, MD, MFA, CCFP(AM), FCFP, dipABAM, brings over a decade of experience in both rural and urban family medicine and has served for more than 10 years as an addiction and pain medicine consultant. She holds esteemed certifications, including a diplomate of the American Board of Addiction Medicine and Fellow of the College of Family Physicians of Canada with a certificate in addiction medicine. Currently, Dr. Shklanka holds the positions of Lead Faculty for Behavioural Medicine and Wellness and Clinical Assistant Professor at the Vancouver-Fraser Site of the Family Practice Program at UBC, where she was honored with the Vancouver-Fraser Resident Teaching Award in 2020. Previously, she held the role of Department Head of Addiction Medicine at the Royal Columbian Hospital and was Co-Chair of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee. Dr. Shklanka is passionate about guiding and supporting fellow professionals, offering expertise in coaching, motivational interviewing, clinical communication, counselling, physician resilience, mindfulness, boundaries, and difficult conversations. In addition to her medical acumen, she has showcased her creative side through the publication of two poetry books, *Sumac's Red Arms* and *Ceremony of Touching*. Dr. Shklanka's dedication to medicine and her creative endeavors exemplify her well-rounded approach to professional growth.

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**Ellen L. Singer, MD, FACP**, is the Medical Director, The Foundation For Medical Excellence. Ellen is a dually board-certified internist and pediatrician with 28 years of clinical experience in primary care and urgent care. She attended medical school and completed her combined residency and chief residency at the University of Rochester School of Medicine. Ellen began her career in Oregon at OHSU in 1995 and joined Northwest Permanente (NWP) PC in 2001. She has served as medical director of several large clinical practices and was the NW Permanente Ambulatory Internal Medicine department chief from 2012-2018. Ellen has trained as a narrative medicine facilitator with NW Narrative Medicine, as a co-Active and positive intelligence coach, and with the Harvard Program on Negotiation. In late 2022 she retired from her primary care practice with NW Permanente and began a new career as a physician development coach with Legacy Medical Group. She continues to work in convenient care with NW Permanente. Ellen has a longstanding interest in training and improving clinical communication skills, improving medical education and helping others learn and grow in leadership skills. She values the opportunity to create conversations about health care sustainability and delivery in our community through TFME's educational offerings and regional collaborations.

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**Sean Tollison**, PhD, is Clinical Director of the Pain Management Program, Rehabilitation Institute of Washington in Seattle. He received his BS in psychology at the University of New Mexico and PhD. in clinical psychology from the University of Washington. He completed his internship and a one-year post-doctoral fellowship in interdisciplinary treatment of substance abuse at the Seattle VA Medical Center. After completing his fellowship at the Seattle VA, he joined the team at the Rehabilitation Institute of Washington. His interests include utilizing mind-body and motivational approaches incorporating patient values into facilitating the rehabilitation process and improving general well-being.

## Small Group Faculty

**Michael Alberts, MD**

**Keith Bachman, MD**

**Alivia Cetas, MD**

**Elia Cole, DO**

**Michele Knox, MD**

**Anna Peter, MD**

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## Live Event Agenda

- 8:00 - 8:30**      **Welcome, course goals and vision**  
Ellen Singer, MD; David Unger, MD
- 8:30 - 9:30**      **Review of key concepts: Managing requests for antibiotics, stimulants, opioids/sedatives, and sleep aids**  
Kevin Afra, MD; Andrea Matsumura, MD; Karen Shklanka, MD; Ellen Singer, MD
- 9:30 - 10:30**      **Hearing the story AND setting limits: Strategies for managing patient requests and offering new solutions**  
Karen Shklanka, MD; Ellen Singer, MD; Sean Tollison, PhD
- 10:30 - 10:40**      **Break**
- 10:40 - 12:30**      **Small group facilitated case challenges**  
Meet and interview “patients” with challenging pain problems. A series of “clinic visits” will provide opportunities to practise new skills with your colleagues and a facilitator.
- 12:30 - 1:00**      **Lunch break**
- 1:00 - 3:00**      **Small group facilitated case challenges (continued)**
- 3:00 - 3:30**      **Wrap up**  
All faculty

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## Self-Paced Sessions

Set the stage for mastering these difficult prescribing conversations. In four stand-alone self-paced sessions, review fundamentals of safe prescribing, considerations, and how to positively engage with patients and manage their concerns.

Each self-paced session can be watched on LearnDash and will take 40-60 minutes to view, including a short quiz at the end to demonstrate mastery of these concepts (required for CME credit). Each session awards one hour of CME credit upon completion of the program on April 10, 2026.

**Available  
February 2**

**Pain to Progress: Transformative Dialogues on Opioids**  
Karen Shklanka, MD

**Available  
February 16**

**Managing Requests for Antibiotics in Ambulatory Care Clinics**  
Kevin Afra, MD

**Available  
March 2**

**Managing Requests for Sleep Aids**  
Andrea Matsumura, MD

**Available  
March 12**

**Managing Requests for Stimulants in Ambulatory Care Clinics**  
Ellen Singer, MD

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## Registration

Registration is available online at [www.tfme.org](http://www.tfme.org).

### Early bird registration

Fee: \$275 USD

Available through February 15, 2026

### General registration

Fee: \$350 USD

Available through March 29, 2026

### Medical student registration

Fee: \$200 USD (no early bird price)

Available through March 29, 2026

Refunds prior to March 29, 2026 will be charged a \$50 USD fee. No refunds after March 29, 2026.

Please note that The Foundation for Medical Excellence is not responsible any conversion fees charged by a banking institution.

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## Continuing Professional Development

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through the joint providership of the Oregon Medical Association and The Foundation for Medical Excellence. The Oregon Medical Association is accredited by the ACCME to provide continuing medical education for physicians. The Oregon Medical Association designates this live activity for a maximum of 9 AMA PRA Category 1 credit(s)<sup>™</sup>. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

To receive all 9 AMA PRA Category 1 credit(s)<sup>™</sup>, participants are required to view the four self-paced, asynchronous sessions and take a short quiz at the end of each session (time commitment approximately four hours total, or one hour per session) between February 2 and April 30, as well as participate in the live event on April 10 from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. PST (for five credit hours).

CPD documents will arrive by email via Gutenberg Certs by April 30, 2026.

The Foundation for Medical Excellence fully complies with the legal requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act rules and regulations thereof. If any participant attending this educational activity is in need of accommodation, please contact The Foundation for Medical Excellence in order to receive accommodations.

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## About TFME

The Foundation for Medical Excellence (TFME) was created in November 1984. Its mission is to promote excellence in health care and advance sound health policy through education and collaboration. TFME's educational offerings center on contemporary medical issues facing physicians including leadership, physician well-being and communication.



[www.tfme.org](http://www.tfme.org)

This program has received financial support from the  
College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC in the form of an educational grant.