



SPRING 2008

# S I E R R A T U C S O N P R O G R E S S S

## In the Forefront: Sierra Tucson's Pain Management Program

Sierra Tucson's expertise in pain medicine and comprehensive approach to pain management has expanded into our extremely successful **Pain Management Program**. This new program helps many patients learn to manage, control, and reduce their pain.

For years, Sierra Tucson has provided Pain Management services to our patients with chronic pain, with the focus of treatment centering on the addictive disorder. Now, with the development of our pioneering Pain Management Program, Sierra Tucson treats the pain disorder and the addictive disorder, if one exists, concurrently. A major benefit of the new Pain Management Program, rather than offering a collection of services, is a tightly-knit treatment team that communicates daily to ensure the highest level of care. When any one of the treatment providers sees significant movement in a patient, that clinician promptly notifies the entire treatment team. Thus, each member of the team is continually up-to-date on every patient's progress.

### *Addiction-Free Pain Management™ (APM™) Center of Excellence*

To further qualify this Pain Management Program, Sierra Tucson is the first treatment facility in the United States to obtain the **Addiction-Free Pain Management™ (APM™) Center of Excellence** designation. The *APM™ Center of Excellence* was developed by Dr. Stephen F. Grinstead in collaboration with Terence T. Gorski and the Gorski-CENAPS® Corporation. This designation is reserved for treatment providers who have demonstrated skilled pain management and addiction treatment services through the use of the Addiction-Free Pain Management™ System. Although any provider may seek this designation, they must meet the rigorous standards for endorsement to be officially recognized. Sierra Tucson's Pain Management Program has been provided with a complete set of APM™ clinical manuals and customized treatment plans.

"The importance of this *APM™ Center of Excellence* designation is multifaceted," says Shari Corbitt, Psy.D., Sierra Tucson's Clinical Director. "There are many treatment options, making it difficult for consumers to make the best choice. Potential patients and

professionals can now be assured that the Sierra Tucson treatment team is solely dedicated to treating patients with pain syndromes, and that addictive or other mental/behavioral disorders will be addressed simultaneously."

The *APM™ Center of Excellence* designation also signifies that staff are certified in Relapse Prevention Counseling and Denial Management Counseling for Effective Pain Management. Thus, no psycho-educational component is left out. All patients leave treatment with a Relapse Prevention Plan, a Pain Flare-Up Plan, and a Craving Management Plan.

### *Expert Diagnosis & Comprehensive Treatment Planning*

Sierra Tucson's Pain Management Program's effectiveness is credited with expert pain diagnosis by pain specialists Dr. Steven Galper and Dr. Mark Pirtle and comprehensive, individualized treatment planning. Chronic pain is complex in its causes and affects all parts of the body—the tissues, bodily systems, and the mind. Therefore, treatment must be coordinated to target the physical, psychological, social, and even spiritual aspects of the patient. "The mind and body can heal in amazing ways," notes Dr. Pirtle. For example, "neuroplasticity" refers to the brain's ability to make new connections all the time as a response to training as well as injury. Consequently, a person's brain can be conditioned to anticipate pain with awakening, movement, etc., but the brain can also be "rewired" or "re-mapped" through treatment modalities to change the person's experience and reduce pain.

*(Continued on page 2)*

<b><i>In this Issue</i></b>	<b><i>Page</i></b>
Pain Management Program . . . . .	1
Letter from the Executive Director . . . . .	2
Dr. Robert Johnson, Medical Director . . . . .	3
Career Opportunities . . . . .	3
Summit for Clinical Excellence . . . . .	3
Meet Dr. Mark Farris Pirtle . . . . .	4



*(Continued from page 1)*

The following services may be utilized as part of treatment in the Pain Management Program:

- Musculoskeletal and Neurological Exam
- Medical Consultations and Care
- Skilled Nursing
- Physical Therapy
- Psychological Evaluation
- Pharmacological Evaluation
- Didactic Lectures
- Awareness-Based Sensory Integration (ABSI)
- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)
- Experiential Therapy
- Equine-Assisted Therapy
- Substance Abuse Counseling
- Trigger Point Therapy
- Acupuncture
- Safe Exercise and Movement Therapies
- Pool and Hydrotherapy
- Sleep Restoration Plan
- Anti-inflammatory Nutrition Instruction
- Manual Therapies: Massage, Mobilization, Manipulation
- Other Integrative Therapies, as indicated
- Pain Flare-up Planning
- Relapse Prevention and Denial Management Counseling

Sierra Tucson staff who work together in the Pain Management Program include:

- Shari Corbitt, Psy.D., Clinical Director
- Steven R. Galper, M.D., J.D., M.B.A, Chief of Pain Medicine
- Mark Farris Pirtle, D.P.T., CSCS, COMT, Associate Director of the Pain Management Program
- Carol Power, R.N., M.S.N., Director of Nursing
- Linda Hampton, M.A., LPC, LISAC, Unit Therapist, Pain Management Program
- Brenda Baker, M.Ed., LISAC, CADAC, Unit Therapist, Pain Management Program
- Kathy Piaskowski, M.C., LISAC, LAC, Continuing Care/Case Manager

Additionally, Dr. Corbitt gives special mention to Mary Strasser, LPC, who facilitates all of the evening psycho-educational groups for this program, and JoAnn Alexander, CADAC, who oversees the evening Twelve-Step groups for Chronic Pain Anonymous.

“By virtue of having a cogent program that is well-orchestrated, there are no cracks through which a patient can fall,” states Dr. Corbitt. “Specifically, patients are scheduled for a multiplicity of integrative services, such as Massage Therapy and Shiatsu, and consultations without delay.” The program is designed with some process groups in the morning and some in the afternoon, to allow scheduling for the many important integrative therapies and various therapeutic sessions. With guidance from an exercise physiologist, each patient develops a daily exercise routine.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## *Letter from the Executive Director Keith P. Arnold*

Dear Friend,

I hope this newsletter finds you well! The New Year began with a lot of excitement and positive energy. We have greatly enhanced our Pain Management services and developed these into a complete program. After an extensive search, we are excited to announce the appointment of our new Medical Director, Dr. Rob Johnson. And on top of this, we received an outstanding survey from JCAHO!

We have added additional services for people with eating addictions who are not in the Eating Disorders Program, as well as additional pain services for those not in the Pain Management Program. The evening and weekend schedules continue to be enhanced, and we have added Somato-Emotional Massage Therapy to our Integrative offerings. The Progressions Program, our two- to four-week extension for life skills treatment and advanced relapse prevention, is very different than all of our other programs. The Progressions Program is now open to alumni who have recently graduated and need additional support and therapeutic experience.

The energy brought with the opening of the new lodge, Dancing Sun, has added greatly to the experience of our community, as well. Through diversity and commonality, patients' experiences are enriched and they become more willing to look at many issues within themselves. Another important, long-awaited change is that two of our three lodges are now gender-specific.

Of course, none of these additions and improvements could happen without our staff's commitment, your support, and CRC's backing. We are so grateful for what we have here and for the superior quality of care we can give. We are especially grateful to you for your continued trust and guidance.



All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith P. Arnold". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Keith P. Arnold  
Executive Director

## Sierra Tucson announces our new Medical Director... Robert R. Johnson, D.O.

Sierra Tucson's staff heartily welcomes Dr. Johnson to the position of Medical Director. Board certified in Psychiatry and Neurology, Dr. Johnson's previous roles include senior medical director of College Hospital (a 140-bed facility), private practice, and executive coaching, among others. Dr. Johnson received bachelor's degrees in both Biological Sciences and Psychology from the University of California, Irvine. Graduating from the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine, he completed his medical Internship at Phoenix General Hospital and his Residency in Psychiatry at Harbor/UCLA Medical Center. He has done research on depression, immune functioning in psychiatric patients, and physical illnesses that produce psychiatric symptoms. He also has a great deal of experience treating patients with addictions and co-occurring disorders. Dr. Johnson has lectured nationally and internationally. He has been involved with the Special Olympics and Down Syndrome Association and has received numerous awards, including the Outstanding Physician Award by the Greater Newport Physician Medical Group. He enjoys tennis, mountain biking, and golf. He is married to a child psychiatrist; they have one son and one daughter.



As a person who "loves learning and interesting challenges," Dr. Johnson says, "I'm also passionate about supporting, motivating, and growing individuals and systems." His personal purpose statement is, "'To support, encourage, and equip those who spend their lives in service to others.' I help helpers help."

Sierra Tucson is very grateful to Jerry Fitz, M.D., who has served exceptionally as Interim Medical Director. After a transition period, Dr. Fitz will resume his role as Chief of Addiction Medicine.

As Sierra Tucson expands and enhances our dynamic programs, exciting career opportunities are being created.

If you are interested in growing with us, please visit our website at [www.SierraTucson.com](http://www.SierraTucson.com).  
(Click on "About Us," then "Careers")

Check often ~ new openings will be listed as they become available.

**SUMMIT 2008**  
for Clinical Excellence  
Presented by Ben Franklin Institute & Sierra Tucson with various co-hosts!

Chicago, IL - April 10 - 13  
Las Vegas, NV - June 5 - 8  
Park City, UT - August 14 - 16  
Tempe, AZ - October 22 - 25

For information, call 800-643-0797 or visit [www.BFIsummit.com](http://www.BFIsummit.com).

(Continued from page 2)

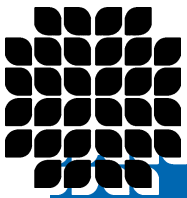
The program has been strengthened even further by implementing intensive programming six days per week. Unit Therapists Linda Hampton and Brenda Baker now work Saturdays (instead of Mondays) to facilitate Saturday two-hour process groups and two-hour DBT workshops for patients in the Pain Management Program. Each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, Dr. Pirtle engages patients in didactic lectures specific to their week of treatment. For example, one of Week One's lectures is on "Pain Science," and each of the six weeks offers highly relevant education about pain and mind-body interventions, such as "Awareness-Based Sensory Integration," a meditation method developed to help patients work with their pain. Patients learn from Dr. Pirtle how to cultivate a daily meditation practice.

To guarantee Sierra Tucson's continuing high-quality treatment, the Pain Management Program is periodically re-evaluated by

Dr. Grinstead on a consulting basis. Additionally, Sierra Tucson staff have developed a Performance Improvement Committee, which monitors the program to validate that correct procedures are followed and goals are accomplished.

The results of this multidisciplinary team's expertise and collaboration are exceptional, and healing is seen daily in the patients we treat. In the words of one former patient whose life has been transformed, "Every day is better. I'm doing more than I have in a very long time. You've given me the gift of hope; you've given my children a mother that's actually present. My doctor is blown away with how I'm doing. The work you're doing is far-reaching; there's certainly a ripple effect going on with me and my family, friends, doctors, etc. The words 'thank you' don't seem adequate."

By Kathy A. Steffens



SIERRA TUCSON®  
39580 S. Lago del Oro Parkway  
Tucson, AZ 85739

800-842-4487

[www.SierraTucson.com](http://www.SierraTucson.com)

*“Compassionate Care, Clinical Excellence”*

SIERRA TUCSON  
P R O G R E S S

SPRING 2008

A Member of CRC Health Group  
© Copyright 2008 Sierra Tucson®

*Meet Mark Farris Pirtle, D.P.T., CSCS, COMT  
Associate Director of Sierra Tucson’s Pain Management Program*

Dr. Mark Pirtle’s path to Sierra Tucson is cobbled with what he calls “the stones of experience placed by curiosity and challenge.” I’ve always been fascinated by what it takes to stretch, to put oneself on the line,” acknowledges Dr. Pirtle. This energy, along with a family tradition of military service, propelled Dr. Pirtle, as a young man, to go through Officer Candidate School for the Marine Corps, where he graduated with a 97% approval rating. “Through this demanding experience, I learned a lot about what I am truly capable of,” he states. Although Dr. Pirtle decided not to accept his commission, he came back with a huge sense of accomplishment, which enabled him to pursue and achieve other things that required effort, such as his education, building a business, earning a Black Belt in martial arts, learning to play guitar and sail, and, most important, learning how to meditate.

Dr. Pirtle finished his bachelor’s degree in Political Science at the University of Arizona and then pursued a B.S. in Physical Therapy at Northern Arizona University. He later completed his Doctor of Physical Therapy degree (with Distinction) at NAU. He trained extensively with the International Academy of Orthopedic Medicine - Europe, becoming a Certified Orthopedic Manual Therapist (COMT). He is also certified by the National Strength and Conditioning Association as a Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS).

Another life-changing event came later after a bottoming-out experience. Because of this, Dr. Pirtle was called to spend eight weeks at a monastery in Australia. While there, he learned meditation, the “oldest recovery model.” He explains, “If you have a good teacher and learn to meditate skillfully, you come to the place where you’re able to recover and grow beyond your triggers. I now have an internal compass that feels solid, so that I’m not as affected when provoked by critical people or lousy circumstances.” Blending pain science with meditation, he began teaching at Dr. Andrew Weil’s *Integrative Medicine Fellowship Program* at the UA.

Having practiced Physical Therapy for almost 19 years, Dr. Pirtle’s knowledge of orthopedics, ability to diagnose neuro-musculoskeletal injuries, and his understanding of mind-body interactions made him the perfect candidate to join Sierra Tucson in the fall of 2007 as a pain specialist. Remarkable healing is possible, as in the patient who



came in with a back brace, “10/10” pain level, and could sit only minutes at a time. Six weeks later this patient left treatment with no brace, little pain, and could sit for one hour perfectly still. It is easy to share Dr. Pirtle’s enthusiasm as he reveals, “I love to see the most complex, troubled patients gain insights that initiate healing from within and change their lives.”