BACKGROUND

- Chronic low back pain (CLBP) afflicts 28.5% of adults costing $100-200 billion dollars.
- In response, the Institute of Medicine (2011) strongly recommended self-management (SM) to engage patients to care for themselves adequately.
- Healthcare professionals are also urged to provide effective self-management support (SMS) to empower patient’s ability to self-manage.
- SM and SMS have shown success in improving other chronic disease outcomes; current knowledge base are insufficient in non-malignant CLBP.

PURPOSE

- Examined SM, SMS, and other pain-related variables on CLBP in primary care
- Described participant perceptions of their SM, SMS, and functional ability

METHODS

- Non-experimental, cross-sectional, descriptive design, using general linear modeling and qualitative content analysis
- Data collected from 120 participants in four primary care clinics using 4 survey measures

RESULTS

- SMS was found to significantly influence SM and mental health.
  - Participant-perceived overall health significantly influenced functional ability and pain intensity.
  - Participants described taking medications, exercising, and making lifestyle changes as most common SM strategies.
  - Prescribing medications, giving encouragement, and providing information were main participant-perceived SMS activities.
  - Depression and anxiety were key responses to participant perceptions on functional ability.

DISCUSSION

- There is a great need to develop evidence-based SM and SMS programs specific to CLBP patients’ needs.
- Nurses play major roles in leading these initiatives.
- Study findings also reinforce the importance of interprofessional collaboration with psychologists and physical therapists’ in the complex care of CLBP.
- Longitudinal and experimental studies are recommended to evaluate SM and SMS programs that include physical therapy and psychological care components.