Why Am I Needed?

Pain sufferer voices must be heard as best estimates reveal that 100 million people suffer from chronic pain in the USA. Collectively, individual voices detailing personal experiences, issues, and obstacles to care need to be made known as the national spotlight focuses on chronic pain management, appropriate prescribing, the epidemic of addiction, dependence, and overdose surrounding the medications to treat.

Rural America has seen the largest issues surrounding prescription drug misuse, abuse, diversion and overdose, with the constant questioning of prescribing levels frequently above the individual state average. Contributing factors can include higher levels of manual labor, increasing need for treatment for injury and chronic pain; additionally, increased levels of poverty, unemployment, depression, and lack of alternative treatments with medication therapy are lacking. Collective voices will draw attention to bring about systematic change in care meeting the individual need.

What Do I Need to Know?

A comprehensive approach that addresses the physical, mental, and emotional aspects surrounding pain is necessary in establishing a functional supportive lifestyle. As medication has been the primary first course of therapy to relieve pain, it still remains a treatment option, but for many requires integration of other supportive therapies or perhaps more invasive intervention.

Many alternatives or additional modalities are available and should become more obtainable. For someone with pain, a continued seeking of relief may be constant, which has led many to attempt to self-treat and medicate. It is important to know and share all measures with one's health care team to avoid adverse affects. This would include vitamin and herbal therapy, over the counter products, or medication prescribed by another provider.

A comprehensive list of therapies and interventions is available from PartnersAgainstPain.com, with additional resources listed on reverse.

Overall patient health is one of the largest contributing factors adversely affecting chronic pain management. Lack of exercise, poor nutrition, cigarette smoking, obesity, and poor stress management are contributing factors for some while inability to adequately function in daily activities may result in a lifestyle counter indicative to wellness and managing pain. Though not true for all, it is important to evaluate one's own regimen for managing chronic pain and learning how best to address daily living to thrive.

Furthermore, communication with one's own healthcare team is vital for the understanding of individual pain and the dynamics surrounding the peaks and valleys of both the physical and emotional elements of chronic pain. It is important to document personal experiences, known adverse affects, as well as what brings comfort and relief while functioning at the level desired.

This takes individuals beyond the “pain scale of 1-10” and assists in the multi-faceted approach to treatment. Additionally, this communication further assists family and friends in understanding the elements of one's pain, providing better appropriated care and support that is less stigmatized.
What Needs To Be Done?

- Improve coverage for nutrition, counseling, and lifestyle management.
- Increase access to pain and palliative care treatment.
- Remove the stigma surrounding individuals with pain.
- Increase medical provider education for chronic pain management in medical school and subsequent continuing medical education.
- Remove obstacles that hinder the medical provider from individualizing the patients treatment for chronic pain.
- Implementation of screening and assessment modalities to lessen risk of adverse affects and addiction.

*Take Correctly, Store Securely, Dispose Properly, Never Share.*

Resources

- American Academy of Pain Management: [www.aapainmanage.org](http://www.aapainmanage.org)
- American Academy of Pain Medicine: [www.painmed.org](http://www.painmed.org)
- American Osteopathic Association: [http://www.osteopathic.org](http://www.osteopathic.org)
- American Pain Society: [www.americanpainsociety.org](http://www.americanpainsociety.org)
- Carolinas Pain Society: [www.carolinapain.org](http://www.carolinapain.org)
- Consortium of Academic Health Centers for Integrative Medicine: [http://www.imconsortium.org](http://www.imconsortium.org)
- Foundation for Alternative and Integrative Medicine: [http://www.faim.org](http://www.faim.org)
- PubMed Central (PMC) is the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) free digital archive of biomedical and life sciences journal literature, and another excellent resource for information on integrative therapies. [http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/)
- U.S. Pain Foundation: [http://www.uspainfoundation.org](http://www.uspainfoundation.org)

For more information visit [projectlazarus.org](http://projectlazarus.org) or call +1.336.667.8100