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AAPM Commitment Statement on Countering the U.S. Opioid Epidemic

A statement from the American Academy of Pain Medicine

The ongoing opioid crisis lies at the intersection of two public health challenges: reducing the burden of suffering from pain and containing the increasing toll of the harms that can arise from opioid use disorder. As a step toward addressing these challenges and reversing the opioid epidemic, AAPM is a committed partner organization to the National Academy of Medicine's (NAM) Action Collaborative on Countering the U.S. Opioid Epidemic. In addition to serving as a NAM Action Collaborative Network Member, the Academy is represented by Immediate AAPM Past President Jianguo Cheng, MD PhD on two of the Action Collaborative's working groups: the Health Professional Education and Training Working Group and the Research, Data, and Metrics Needs Working Group.

As a multidisciplinary professional society, AAPM is committed to improving the care of patients with acute, chronic, and end-of-life pain. Chronic pain alone affects more Americans than diabetes, heart disease, and cancer combined; costs our nation hundreds of billions dollars in lost productivity; and creates tremendous suffering for patients and their families. While AAPM members, the organizations and individuals that contribute to the NAM Action Collaborative on Countering the U.S. Opioid Epidemic, and our entire nation work to address the ongoing opioid epidemic, it is important to remember that opioids are only one of many tools available to treat pain. AAPM members utilize the full spectrum of treatment options, including physical/cognitive/behavioral, pharmacological, interventional, surgical, and integrative modalities. AAPM is especially interested in solutions to the opioid crisis that value research, education, training, and advocacy for improved patient access to pain care that is comprehensive and patient-centered, and that employs a multidisciplinary, team-based approach to multimodal and individualized patient care.

AAPM is committed to lending its collective medical expertise and working with other organizations, including federal agencies such as NAM, to find real solutions to our nation's opioid epidemic. We believe that federal and state policies should be directed at reducing the problem of opioid over prescribing while, at the same time, allowing appropriate access to all treatment modalities for patient with acute, chronic, and end-of-life pain and for patients with substance use disorder.

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About AAPM

The American Academy of Pain Medicine is the premier medical association for pain physicians and their treatment teams with some 2,000 members. Now in its 36th year of service, the Academy's mission is to advance and promote the full spectrum of multidisciplinary pain care, education, advocacy, and research to improve function and quality of life for people in pain. Information is available on the Academy's website at painmed.org.

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