



**Press Release, Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2020**

## **Michigan Don't Punish Pain Rally: Oct. 6, 12:00-2:00 pm**

In the attempt to rein in the misuse of illegal/illicit drugs associated with the “opioid epidemic”, the federal government and state governments and agencies have implemented policies that have caused great harm to Americans who are chronic pain patients in need of FDA-approved pain medications.

The CDC Guidelines for prescribing opioids for chronic pain were released in 2016. These guidelines were intended ONLY to provide recommendations for primary care physicians. But they are often misinterpreted by legislators and regulators and some misinterpretations have become hard and fast rules. A regime of tough enforcement in turn has sharply fractured physician/patient relationships, negatively affected the supply of physician providers, and lowered patient access to appropriate care.

Consequently, millions of pain patients have been dropped from their medications without a safe and controlled taper. Many patients are now finding it impossible to find new providers and obtain pain relief they previously received.

Chronic pain patients deserve appropriate care. We believe it is possible to treat pain properly and at the same time to help prevent overdoses. We believe it is possible to identify and certify specific patients with intractable, incurable pain to help justify measures that alleviate uncontrollable suffering. It is possible to find a more balanced and less punitive approach.

A loose alliance of medical professionals and pain patients has been pushing in MI for simple remedies for two years. What is to be done? Update the 2016 guidelines. Acknowledge that they were not to be applied to patients with cancer or in either hospice or palliative care.

Come to our rally in downtown Lansing at the State Capitol on Oct. 6. Help amplify our voices for equitable policy change. Speakers will include chronic pain patients, legislators, and medical professionals committed to changing the situation. Please wear masks against the Covid danger.

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