

The Real Facts Behind the “Opioid Crisis” and the Abandonment of Pain Patients:

(Revised 10/6/2018)

- Andrew Kolodny and Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing - PROP (mostly addiction specialists with little experience treating pain with opioids) petitioned the FDA in 2012 to change opioid manufacturing guidelines for patients with non-cancer pain, asking FDA to limit dosing to 100 MED and limit treatment to 90 days. FDA denied this request in 2013 due to a lack of scientific evidence to support limiting usage or dosage and no evidence to suggest cancer pain is different from non-cancer pain. Most patients treated with opioids on higher doses and long term treatment do well and live productive lives without addiction or death.
- 2014 - Illicit fentanyl was added to other illicitly manufactured drugs such as heroin, hydrocodone, xanax, etc. Addicts buy their drug of choice on the street not realizing it has fentanyl in it. Fentanyl is 50-100 times stronger than morphine. Addicts began dying in mass quantities catching the attention of the media and the government.
- Thinking the increase in deaths were from prescription opioids, DEA stepped up enforcement on doctors and pharmacies, threatening and prosecuting doctors for "over prescribing" opioids to pain patients.
- CDC published the 2016 opioid death report which falsely claimed pain patients were addicted and dying in massive numbers even though historically pain patients are rarely addicted or involved in opioid-related deaths.
- CDC contracted with members from the anti-drug lobbying group PROP to help draft CDC guidelines for opioid prescriptions written by primary care physicians even though CDC and PROP knew that illicitly manufactured fentanyl and heroin was the cause of the crisis. CDC Guidelines were implemented by the states as rule rather than guidelines as originally intended, forcing pain patients off their medication or to a lower, non-therapeutic dosage. This was done in spite of CDC having no prescription regulatory power and FDA already telling PROP there is no scientific evidence to suggest these limitations are necessary or useful.
- Pharmacies and insurance companies began limiting opioid quantities and/or refusing to fill opioid prescriptions based on perceived addiction bias against patients with pain from all causes due to media/government misinformation, namely the original 2016 CDC opioid death report and guidelines.
- FDA cut production of opioids creating shortages and leaving many hospitals, cancer patients, and pain patients without medication to treat pain.
- In 2018, CDC finally issued a correction for the 2016 opioid death report admitting that the majority of the deaths were from illicit fentanyl and heroin, not legal prescription pain pills. CDC and National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) concede pain patients are almost never involved in opioid-related deaths. According to SAMHSA 2016 and similar studies the addiction rate for pain patients is less than 1%. That means 99% do not get addicted.
- Government/regulators ignore CDC and NIDA statements, continue threatening doctors. Many doctors stopped treating pain patients and many closed their practice due to fear of losing their license or being prosecuted. Many pain patients are left with no treatment for pain leaving them to suffer in agony with no support.
- NIH, FDA, DEA, CMS, Medical Boards, States abandon pain patients based on CDC's initial report and guidelines implemented as rule because of the false ideology CDC created. The majority of drug addicts continue to get their drugs on the street and are still dying with no help. All pain patients, including cancer patients, blamed for illicit fentanyl and heroin addiction/overdoses and continue to suffer needlessly. Production of opioids scheduled to be cut again which will create even more shortages for the few patients still able to get meds and for hospitals. CMS due to implement CDC guidelines as rule for Medicare and Medicaid patients in 2019.
- PROP stands to gain millions in federal money for addiction treatment that will likely never be fully utilized because pain patients are the ones targeted yet most are not addicted. Most of the real addicts do not see doctors unless they OD, thus little access to treatment.

Pain patients and providers need your support! Please call your state and federal legislators, the Medical Board of California, DEA, FDA, CMS, and media and tell them to protect pain patients and their doctors from unfair discrimination. Tell the DEA to leave our doctors alone! Tell them to remove the CDC guidelines and allow access to opioid treatment as allowed by the manufacturer's guidelines. Spread the word!



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dontpunishpainrally.com
dontpunishpainrally.com/docs

Resources

FDA Refuses PROP's Request To Limit Opioid Dosage and Usage

http://paindr.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/FDA_CDOR_Response_to_Physicians_for_Responsible_Opioid_Prescribing_Partial_Petition_Approval_and_Denial.pdf
https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/marvin-ross/doctors-evidence-pain-patients_a_23371118/

PROP Involved in Drafting CDC Guidelines

<https://www.painnewsnetwork.org/stories/2015/9/21/prop-helped-draft-cdc-opioid-guidelines>
<http://nationalpainreport.com/cdc-opioid-prescribing-guideline-unintentional-consequences-8836710.html>

Illicit Fentanyl on the Rise

<https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/images/pbss/CDC-Fentanyl-overdoses-rise.pdf>
<https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics/overdose-death-rates>

CDC Admits Death Data Inaccurate

<https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/10.2105/AJPH.2017.304265>
<http://www.clinicalpainadvisor.com/opioid-addiction/the-issues-with-the-cdc-guidelines-on-opioids-for-chronic-pain/article/524976/>

Pain Reliever Use Disorder - SAMHSA

<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-FFR1-2016/NSDUH-FFR1-2016.htm#opioid4>

Cochran Report - Rate of Addiction Rare

https://www.cochrane.org/CD006605/SYMPT_opioids-long-term-treatment-noncancer-pain

Living with CDC Opioid Guidelines

<https://www.practicalpainmanagement.com/treatments/pharmacological/opioids/living-cdc-opioid-guidelines>
<https://www.practicalpainmanagement.com/treatments/pharmacological/opioids/inhumane-dangerous-game-forced-opioid-reduction>

The Myth That Prescriptions Caused The Opioid Crisis

<https://amp-newsobserver-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/amp.newsobserver.com/opinion/op-ed/article145348794.html>