

NADDI Pain Treatment Statement

Chronic pain is a major health problem for the United States, of “epidemic proportions”. Seventy-five million Americans still suffer chronic handicapping and persistent pain. Many have been living with their pain for more than 5 years and experience pain almost 6 days a week. The current status of pain management in the United States has been described as the “moral outrage of unrelieved pain”. Diversion and abuse of prescription medications has also become a major societal problem. The problem of diversion and abuse of prescription medications is both a societal and a health care problem. It is not a victimless crime, and can result in imprisonment, addiction, death and additional crimes. Additionally there has been an increase use in opiates prescription medications which can tremendously benefit patients but also have the potential of abuse and diversion. This has resulted in significant societal tension and requires a multi-professional approach to improve.

The National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators (NADDI) is firmly committed to aggressive treatment of acute and chronic pain. NADDI also realizes that a vast majority of pain patients are legitimate suffering individuals who need help and care. The use of chronic opioid therapy is a potential tool for the treatment of these patients’s pain. Diversion of prescription medication is a serious felony and should be investigated and prosecuted aggressively.

Continuing progress in the field of pain management involves a juggling act that balances the needs and interests of those involved. These involve all the participants in the medical treatment of pain—clinical, legal, regulatory, law enforcement, industry, commercial, personal, and societal. NADDI recognizes that no one approach to maintaining this critical balance will succeed unilaterally. Therefore, NADDI supports ongoing interaction and cooperation among all who can impact the access to and provision of competent health care, and can affect diversion and abuse of medications.

There is a critical need for balance and close associations and interactions between all involved. Balance needs to occur between; 1) the necessities of regulatory agencies in monitoring health care professionals scheduled medications usage, 2) law enforcements ability to investigate and prosecute individuals involved in diversion, abuse and misuse of scheduled medications, and 3) the ability of physicians to provide opiates and scheduled medications for chronic pain patients. The necessities of law enforcement should not hinder legitimate patients from being able to receive the medications that can alleviate their suffering. NADDI is committed to this concept of balance. Further, NADDI fully supports the Federation of State Medical Boards national model for state medical boards.

NADDI is committed to educating law enforcement officers about the balance that must be maintained between the societal imperatives of reducing diversion and the attendant harm it causes and not interfering with the use of opioid analgesics for legitimate medical purposes.

Health Care Professionals clearly can be one source of diversion; however diversion from other sources also represents a significant portion of the overall problem of prescription drug abuse in America. These sources include pharmacy robbery and burglary, illegal Internet sales, health facility thefts, international smuggling, and a host of other drug diversion scams. Regardless NADDI recognizes that health care professionals have a responsibility to limit, as much as possible, the potential for diversion and mis-use of scheduled medications: This responsibility should be taken seriously by health care professionals. NADDI is also committed to educating health care professional about their responsibilities in the process of reducing diversion and abuse of prescription medications.

NADDI supports the recommendations proposed by the American Academy of Pain Medicine, American Pain Society, and the American Society for Addiction Medicine who set forth policies to help reduce drug diversion. We also believe that those diverting prescription drugs should not negatively impact legitimate patients, who represent the vast majority of those prescribed controlled substances.