

# PAIN MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE

## FACTSHEET POLICYMAKERS

The experience of pain is a national public health problem with physical, emotional, and societal costs



### 50 MILLION ADULTS

live with **daily chronic pain**.



### 19.6 MILLION ADULTS

experience high-impact chronic pain that interferes with **daily life or work activities**.



### THE COST

to our nation is between **\$560 to \$635 billion** a year.

## BACKGROUND

The Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force Report identifies gaps and inconsistencies in pain management and offers recommendations for improving pain management best practices. The Task Force Report focuses on:



- **Personalized and patient-centered** care by clinicians;
- **Multidisciplinary approaches** using one or more treatment modalities that consider the biological, psychological, and socio-environmental factors of pain, as well as the various comorbid conditions that can accompany complex pain conditions; and
- **Special patient populations**, such as youth/pediatrics, older adults, patients with cancer-related pain and patients in palliative care, women, pregnant women, patients with chronic relapsing pain conditions or sickle cell disease, African-Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, military active duty, reserve service members, and Veterans.

## THE TASK FORCE'S RECOMMENDATIONS SPAN FIVE BROAD TREATMENT APPROACHES TO PAIN MANAGEMENT.

These five treatment approaches are reinforced by four cross-cutting themes critical to all treatment approaches.



Medication



Restorative  
Therapies



Interventional  
Procedures



Behavioral  
Health  
Approaches



Complementary  
& Integrative  
Health

Risk Assessment • Stigma • Access to Care • Education

The Report also reviews the 2016 Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Effective pain management means that people can get back to work, support their families and be active in their communities more quickly.

## REPORT PUBLIC COMMENT OVERVIEW

**6,000+** PUBLIC COMMENTS  
for the 90-day comment period

**10,000+** TOTAL PUBLIC COMMENTS  
throughout the year

**160+** SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Select endorsing organizations\* include American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American Medical Association, American Society of Anesthesiologists, and Human Rights Watch

\*As of report release 5/30/2019

## BEST PRACTICES AND CURRENT REALITIES IN PAIN MANAGEMENT

- Adequate acute and chronic pain care requires an individualized, patient-centered, multidisciplinary approach using one or more treatment modalities. This approach leads to improved clinical outcomes, correct use of pain medication, and reduced risk with prescription opioid use. There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to treating pain.
- Quicker access to treatment allows for quicker return to work and daily activities resulting in better patient quality of life and lowering the cost of pain to our nation.
- Patients with pain need quicker access to treatment options in order to improve pain management and reduce risk of suicide.

## IMPROVING POLICIES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF PATIENTS IN PAIN

The issue of pain management is complicated, and every decision made, law passed, or guideline released has a cascading impact on many aspects of pain management. For that reason, a deep understanding of these issues is key in making effective, comprehensive pain management policy. Below are some of the policy considerations identified by the Task Force.



- Make access to educational tools a priority for the public, patients, families, caregivers, and clinicians in order to remove existing barriers like stigma and improve patient outcomes.
- Reimburse clinicians appropriately for the significant time and resources that are required to care for patients in pain.
- Improve insurance coverage and payment for pain management diagnostic and treatment types to improve access to care for patients with pain, special populations, and patients in underserved areas.
- Expand and incentivize the training and availability of pain specialists.
- Explore solutions to key challenges presented by recurring shortages of opioid and non-opioid pain medications.
- Support research to advance new and effective diagnostic, preventive, and therapeutic approaches for patients living with pain.

**ACT  
NOW**

- Review the Report and support initiatives that implement the Report’s recommendations to improve pain management best practices at <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pmtf-final-report-2019-05-23.pdf>.
- Consider holding a legislative hearing on acute and chronic pain in light of the ongoing opioid crisis. Resources are available on the Task Force website at <https://www.hhs.gov/ash/advisory-committees/pain/index.html>.
- Visit the Pain Management Task Force website for fact sheets, talking points, and infographics to learn more about the Report’s findings at <https://www.hhs.gov/ash/advisory-committees/pain/index.html>.
- For more information check out the HHS Blog post at <https://www.hhs.gov/blog/2019/05/10/patient-centered-care-is-key-to-best-practices-in-pain-management.html>.

