

Coordinator's Message for 4/15/06

Pain Management on the Federal Front

According to the American Pain Foundation, (February 13, 2006 press release) the National Pain Care Policy Act of 2005 (H.R. 1020) has received endorsement from 100 organizations nationwide, including the Oregon Pain Management Commission.

The bill was reintroduced by Congressman Michael Rogers from Michigan, a member of the U.S. House Subcommittee on Health. The bill is designed to raise public awareness, improve pain education for healthcare providers, improve access to pain management services, and to increase research on pain conditions. Congressman Rogers stated, "Creating the National pain Care Policy Act is about achieving victory for millions of Americans living with pain and the negative impact it has on their lives, the lives of their families and on the nation's health and well-being. It's about giving people with daily, hourly pain real hope for the future."

Strong support for this bill has been received from patient groups and professional pain management communities. Will Rowe, Executive Director of the American Pain Foundation stated, "This wide-ranging support is a clear indication of how pain cuts across race, age, gender and numerous medical conditions." "The pain community and other stakeholders are demonstrating to our elected officials their strength in number and the opportunity that they have to make a difference in the lives of millions of their constituents."

Pain is the number one reason people in this country seek medical attention, yet medical schools require only limited hours of curriculum to pain management, if at all. According to the American Pain Foundation, pain in America is a public health crisis. An estimated 75 million Americans suffer serious pain annually. Headache, lower back pain, arthritis and other joint pain, and peripheral neuropathy are the most common forms of chronic pain. Despite the incidence of pain, research has shown that only 1 in 4 of those with pain received adequate treatment.

To obtain full details, including updated status information on the legislation, visit the Congressional website at <http://thomas.loc.gov> and enter bill number HR 1020 in the search field.

To learn more about the American Pain Foundation and Pain Care Coalition's support of this bill, visit the their website at www.painfoundation.org