



PARTNERS *for*  
UNDERSTANDING PAIN

**T**hank you for your interest in obtaining a proclamation from your Governor to declare September Pain Awareness Month. As we begin the fifth year of the Decade of Pain Control and Research, we have yet to make a significant impact on increasing research, improving access to care, reducing the cost of care, and dispelling myths about long-term pain. By joining together and giving a human face and voice to a problem we all share, we can mobilize resources to fulfill the promise of the Decade of Pain Control and Research.

Enclosed is an easy-to-follow guide, several examples of proclamations, and useful facts to help in your efforts. Our hope is to have as many states as possible obtain proclamations.

Together our voices will be heard as we work to bring pain to the top of the health care agenda. Please share your success with us so we can post your state's proclamation on the Partners for Understanding Pain web site. If you have any questions, please feel free to call 800-533-3231 or email us at [acpa@pacbell.org](mailto:acpa@pacbell.org). We appreciate your help. Thank you!

## **PARTNERS FOR UNDERSTANDING PAIN MISSION**

- Partners for Understanding Pain is a consortium of organizations that touch the lives of people with chronic, acute, and cancer pain.
- The partnership, spearheaded by the American Chronic Pain Association, will strive to create greater understanding among health care professionals, individuals and families who are struggling with pain management, the business community, legislators, and the general public that pain is a serious public health issue.
- Through its members, each of whom brings its own perspective to the dialogue, Partners for Understanding Pain represents a comprehensive network of resources and knowledge about issues in pain management.
- Partners for Understanding Pain is dedicated to building the understanding and support that can help people with chronic, acute and cancer pain lead better lives. Call 1-800-533-3231 or visit [www.theacpa.org](http://www.theacpa.org) for more information.



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## **PROCESS FOR SECURING STATE GOVERNORS' PROCLAMATIONS**

- 1) **Goal and Purpose:** Identify your goal and the purpose. Example:  
  
The goal is to obtain a Governor's Proclamation declaring September as Pain Awareness Month.  
  
The purpose is to increase awareness surrounding the under-treatment of pain, to activate individuals to work toward reducing barriers and increasing access to appropriate pain management, and to improve the quality life of those suffering from pain.
- 2) **Supporting materials:** Identify and gather all the current supporting materials on the subject. These will form the foundation on which you are making your request. They need to include statistics that reveal the incidence of the problem with credible references. A good source of information would be your state pain initiative whose contact information can be found at [www.aspi.wisc.edu](http://www.aspi.wisc.edu). Use the attached proclamations that were already successful in Arizona and Pennsylvania as a template for your state's proclamation. Any work that you can do for the Governor's office in the writing of the proclamation or providing suggested wording will be appreciated and speed the process along. It will also help to ensure that the finished product accurately reflects your purpose.
- 3) **Contacting the Governor's office:** Once these materials are collected and prepared, call the Governor's office to determine which department is responsible for the writing and issuing of State Governor's Proclamations. This department may vary by state, and may be listed as Public Relations, Press Office, Proclamation Office, etc. Determine the name of the contact person in charge of proclamations in that office. Contact information for your Governor's office can be found at [www.nga.org](http://www.nga.org).
- 4) **Requesting the proclamation:** Call the contact person and introduce yourself and verify that he/she is in charge of proclamations. Identify yourself and explain your mission and state your goal and purpose. Ask if they'd like you to make an appointment to visit with them and share your materials, or if they would prefer that you send them the materials in the mail for their review. (*Use the quickest mailing method that you can afford so that the staff receives the materials soon after the phone call*). Always call to ensure they have received the materials and are comfortable with going forward with the request. In some instances, proclamations can be secured

over the phone, but if you detect some reluctance from them about issuing a proclamation, a face-to-face meeting to make your case can be very effective.

- 5) **Timing:** Be sure to find out how long they anticipate the process to take. It is suggested to allow a minimum of 2-3 months lead-time. In some instances proclamations can be secured in less time, but it is always good to start early. In this instance, Partners for Understanding Pain suggests you secure your September proclamation by the end of June in order to maximize national publicity.
- 6) **Receipt of proclamation:** Request that the office send the finished proclamation directly to you as soon as it is finished. Be sure your contact information is included on all correspondence.
- 7) **Follow up:** It is appreciated when you tell the office how you intend to use the proclamations and then provide them with any pertinent feedback. An example of this relevant to September Pain Awareness Month would include using the recognition from the proclamation to raise awareness about the under-treatment of pain and access and barriers to pain management as a public health issue through media and community outreach. A follow up memo to the Governor's office detailing any events or media coverage will only make your case stronger should you approach them next year.

Attachments:

State proclamations  
Fact sheet about pain  
Decade of Pain, Control and Research



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## PAIN FACT SHEET

Pain touches each one of us at one time or another. Pain can begin for many different reasons. Yet as common as pain is, the medical community is just beginning to understand and better address the many forms of pain.

**Partners for Understanding Pain** developed this fact sheet to provide information and to distinguish among the three types of pain—chronic, acute, and cancer pain.

Acute pain has a distinct beginning and end and is the result of illness or injury. This type of pain usually can be largely relieved with appropriate treatment, as can cancer pain. It is important that the pain be taken seriously and managed as part of sound patient care.

Currently there is no cure for chronic pain and, as a condition that can affect individuals life-long, it also needs to be taken seriously. A multidisciplinary treatment approach can help people with chronic pain regain control of their lives and reduce their sense of suffering.

### CHRONIC PAIN FACTS

#### Key Facts:

- Chronic pain lasts. Pain is considered chronic when it continues beyond the usual recovery period for an injury or an illness. It may be continuous or come and go.
- Chronic pain, sometimes called persistent pain, can be very stressful for both the body and the soul and requires careful, ongoing attention to be appropriately treated.
- Chronic pain is often intractable, as the cause of pain cannot be removed or treated.
- Chronic pain is the number one cause of adult disability in the United States.
- Chronic pain can touch nearly every part of a person's daily life. It also has an impact on the family and, because of its economic and social consequences, it affects us all.
- Chronic pain can be a source of frustration for the health care professionals who seek to provide care and assistance.

#### Incidence:

- The American Chronic Pain Association (ACPA) estimates that one in three Americans (approximately 50 million people) suffers from some type of chronic pain

**Causes:**

- Lower back problems, arthritis, cancer, RSDS, repetitive stress injuries, shingles, headaches, and fibromyalgia are the most common sources of chronic pain. Others include diabetic neuropathy, phantom limb sensation, and other neurological conditions.

**ACUTE PAIN FACTS****Key Facts:**

- Acute pain may be mild and last just a moment. It also can be severe and last for weeks or months, as does pain from a burn, pulled muscle, or broken bone.
- Acute pain has a distinct beginning and end. The cause of acute pain is known and, as you heal, the pain will lessen and finally go away.
- Acute pain usually starts suddenly, may be sharp, and often triggers visible bodily reactions such as sweating, an elevated blood pressure, and more. Acute pain is generally a signal of rapid-onset injury to the body and it resolves when pain relief is given or the injury is treated.
- Pain should be considered the fifth vital sign, along with respiration, pulse, blood pressure, and core temperature.
- Most of the time medication and other treatment can greatly relieve acute pain. Pain management is an important part of effective total care.

**Incidence:**

- Muscle pain, one of the most common types of acute pain, affects 53 percent of Americans.
- Lower back pain is the most common form of acute pain and is the fifth most common cause for all physician visits. It is responsible for direct health care expenditures of more than \$20 billion annually.

**Causes:**

- Acute pain is triggered by tissue damage such as a skin burn, muscle pain, or a broken bone. It's the type of pain that generally accompanies an illness, an injury, or surgery.
- Acute pain can manifest in just about any part of the body.

## **CANCER PAIN FACTS**

### **Key Facts:**

- Not everyone who has cancer experiences pain; those who do may not have it all the time.
- Ongoing cancer pain can be successfully treated in about 95 percent of people with cancer with the drug and non-drug therapies that are currently available.
- Along with ongoing cancer pain, sometimes people have acute flares of pain when not all pain is controlled by the medication or therapy. This pain, usually called breakthrough pain, can also be controlled by additional medications.
- Cancer patients often downplay their pain to doctors for fear that their pain means that their cancer is getting worse or that they will be thought to be complainers.
- In almost every aspect of cancer treatment—surgery, chemotherapy or radiation—cancer patients follow the lead of their doctors. But when it comes to pain, patients need to assert themselves and be open about the degree of pain they are experiencing.

### **Incidence:**

- Approximately 30 to 40 percent of Americans diagnosed with cancer experience moderate to severe pain, with 90 percent of people who have a more advanced diagnosis of cancer experiencing significant amount of pain.
- Sixty to 80 percent of all cancer patients with bone metastases feel pain.

### **Causes:**

- Most cancer pain is caused by the effects of cancer itself, side effects of treatment, compression on bones, nerves or body organs, poor blood circulation, blockage of an organ, metastasis, infection, or inflammation.

Janet Napolitano  
Governor

# Office of the Governor

**\*PAIN AWARENESS MONTH \***

**WHEREAS**, approximately 50 million Americans are living with chronic pain today and it is the number one cause of adult disability in the United States according to the joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO); and

**WHEREAS**, the American Chronic Pain Association (ACPA) has over 500 support groups available in over nine countries; and

**WHEREAS**, these support groups teach pain management skills that are constructive methods of dealing with pain; and

**WHEREAS**, ACPA through Pain Awareness Month, will create public awareness and facilitate cooperative efforts among various organizations with an interest in the many aspects of pain and address the many obstacles and issues that living with chronic pain create;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Janet Napolitano, Governor of the State of Arizona, do hereby proclaim September, 2004 as

**\*PAIN AWARENESS MONTH\***

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Arizona

*Janet Napolitano*  
GOVERNOR

**DONE** at the Capitol in Phoenix on this fourteenth day of June in the year Two Thousand and Four and of the Independence of the United States of America the Two Hundred and Twenty-eighth.

**ATTEST:**

*Janice K. Brewer*  
Secretary of State



# Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

## Governor's Office

### PROCLAMATION

PAIN AWARENESS MONTH  
September 2002

WHEREAS, Pain touches every member of our society at sometime throughout their life; and

WHEREAS, more than 48 million Americans suffer from chronic pain; and

WHEREAS, recent strides have been made in the research and treatment of chronic pain; and

WHEREAS, increased awareness of and potential cures for chronic pain can lead to much needed relief; and

WHEREAS, untreated chronic pain may potentially rob Pennsylvanians of their quality of life – affecting their physical, psychological, social and spiritual well-being.

THEREFORE, In special recognition of the importance of Pain Awareness, I, Mark S. Schweiker, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim September 2002, as PAIN AWARENESS MONTH in Pennsylvania and encourage all citizens to strive to educate themselves and their communities about chronic pain.



GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor at the City of Harrisburg this twenty-sixth day of August in the year of our Lord two thousand and two and of the Commonwealth the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

*Mark S. Schweiker*

MARK S. SCHWEIKER  
Governor



## **2001 TO 2010: THE DECADE OF PAIN CONTROL AND RESEARCH CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

In passing HR 3244, Congress officially declared the ten calendar years beginning on January 1, 2001 to be the Decade of Pain Control and Research. President Clinton signed the bill into law in October, 2000. This is only the second named decade in our history, following the Decade of the Brain in the nineties.

With this designation, brought about through the efforts of the American Academy of Pain Medicine, the American Headache Society, and the American Pain Society, it was hoped that public attention and funding for research would be focused on an under-recognized but very serious issue.

Yet, as we look ahead to the fourth year of the decade, we have barely begun.

- Multi-disciplinary pain management units face program-imperiling budget cuts as health care facilities struggle with declining revenues.
- Skyrocketing pharmaceutical costs leave some, especially seniors, without the means to acquire the medicines that can help them manage their pain.
- Abuse of medications by a small number of individuals has refueled fears about addiction and reawakened stigmas that keep many from even asking about pain management medicines.
- Underserved minorities continue to do without.
- And myths about pain and our potential for managing it prevail in the general population.

*Partners for Understanding Pain* was created to address these and other critical issues surrounding pain management today. Our hope and our mandate is to raise awareness about the sources of pain and the resources now available to people who suffer. Medical research has come far, but we still have far to go.