

DEA to Join Pain Advocates in Issuing Statement on Prescription Pain Medications

Collaboration Prompted by Heightened Attention to Abuse of Pain Relievers Such as OxyContin

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and leading health organizations supporting pain management will issue a joint statement on the use and abuse of prescription pain medications at a press conference, Oct. 23, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Journalists from around the country not able to attend in person may participate in this event by telephone on a live audio hook-up. The joint statement is embargoed until 12:00 Noon EDT, Tuesday, Oct. 23.

This event will mark the first time the DEA has signed on to a consensus statement developed jointly with organizations supporting better pain management. These organizations include groups representing physicians, pharmacists, nurses, anesthesiologists, and patient advocates. Their collaboration is prompted by widespread attention this year to the problem of diversion and abuse of opioid pain relievers. These medications have proven essential to people with pain, including many with chronic conditions or terminal illnesses.

The briefing is being sponsored by Last Acts, the largest national coalition working to improve care near the end of life. Last Acts receives funding from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving health and health care for all Americans.

WHO: Asa Hutchinson, Administrator, Drug Enforcement Administration
Dr. Russell Portenoy, Beth Israel Medical Center
Tom Menighan, President, American Pharmaceutical Association
(the national professional society of pharmacists)
Mary Vargas, chronic pain patient
Karen Orloff Kaplan (Moderator), National Program Director, Last Acts

WHEN: Tuesday, Oct. 23, 2001
12:00 Noon Eastern Daylight Time
LUNCH WILL BE SERVED

WHERE: National Press Club
First Amendment Room
529 14th St., NW
Washington, DC

HOW: Journalists may attend in person or dial in by telephone 5-10 minutes before the event begins. The dial-in number is 800-213-1352.

A taped replay of the press conference will also be accessible for 24 hours after the event by dialing 800-633-8284. When prompted, use the access code 19858309.

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DEA Contact: Michael L. Chapman, Chief, Public Affairs, 202-307-7977

[American Academy of Family Physicians](#)

[American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine](#)

[American Academy of Pain Medicine](#)

[American Alliance of Cancer Pain Initiatives](#)

[American Cancer Society](#)

[American Medical Association](#)

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[American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine](#)

[Community-State Partnerships to Improve End-of-Life Care](#)

[Drug Enforcement Administration](#)

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[Midwest Bioethics Center](#)

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[University of Wisconsin Pain & Policy Studies Group](#)