

Top Cancer Groups Announce State Pain Policies Evaluation Results

Washington 2007/07/17 -In the second year of their joint program to promote better pain control, the American Cancer Society, the Lance Armstrong Foundation and Susan G. Komen for the Cure today released the 2007 Pain and Policy Report Card and Evaluation Guide of state-level pain management policies across the country.

The organizations, which represent the nation's leading information and advocacy groups for people with cancer, are funding a three-year grant to the Pain & Policy Studies Group (PPSG) at the University of Wisconsin Paul P. Carbone Comprehensive Cancer Center to examine policies that govern pain management practices for cancer patients in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The 2007 report card shows that California and Wisconsin had the greatest grade improvement. Other states whose grades improved from last year were Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Kansas, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire.

In addition, Kansas and Wisconsin now join Michigan and Virginia as having the most balanced pain policies in the nation.

"These states have laws that are consistent with current medical practice standards and do not impede pain treatment," said Aaron M. Gilson, PhD, director for U.S. Policy Research at the PPSG. "Also, the licensing agencies in these states encourage healthcare professionals to practice good pain management by making pain relief an expectation of quality patient care and reassure practitioners that treating patients' pain will not result in disciplinary sanctions."

Chronic pain is a part of daily life for more than 50 percent of all cancer patients and survivors and for more than 75 percent of those with advanced stages of the disease – figures that have remained unchanged for decades, despite advances in therapeutic options to address pain.

With support from the American Cancer Society, the Lance Armstrong Foundation and Susan G. Komen for the Cure, PPSG issued a report card last September and will issue another report card in 2008. For more information on the University of Wisconsin's PPSG, visit www.painpolicy.wisc.edu

About the Pain & Policy Studies Group The University of Wisconsin's Pain and Policy Studies Group (PPSG) is headed by David E. Joranson, MSSW, and Aaron M. Gilson, PhD, internationally known experts on pain control policy who implemented a first-of-its-kind study in 2003 comparing pain policies throughout the country. The results of that study, reported in *Achieving Balance in State Pain Policy: A Progress Report Card*, showed that more than half of all states had policies that encouraged pain management, addressed physicians' fears of regulatory scrutiny and drew distinctions between physical dependence or tolerance and addiction.

But the report also showed that much more progress can be made. A total of 38 states received a grade of C or worse, demonstrating inadequacies in their pain management policies. Many states reacted to the 2003 report by amending their policies to be more balanced. PPSG has collaborated with health care professionals, non-governmental organizations and government officials to help adopt policies that promote the appropriate use of pain medications. The grant announced today is intended to identify where progress is needed to encourage positive momentum for pain relief and palliative care.

About the American Cancer Society The American Cancer Society is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by saving lives, diminishing suffering and preventing cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. Founded in 1913 and with national headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, the Society has 13 regional Divisions and local offices in 3,400 communities, involving millions of volunteers across America. For more information anytime, call toll free 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit www.cancer.org

About the Lance Armstrong Foundation The Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF) unites people to fight cancer, believing that unity is strength, knowledge is power and attitude is everything. We provide the practical information and tools people battling cancer need to live life on their own terms. We take aim at the gap between what is known and what is done to prevent death and suffering due to cancer. We engage the public at large to pursue an agenda focused on preventing cancer, ensuring access to screening and care, improving the quality of life for people affected by cancer, and investing in needed research. Founded in 1997 by cancer survivor and champion cyclist Lance Armstrong, the LAF is located in Austin, Texas. UNITE at www.livestrong.org

About Susan G. Komen for the Cure

Nancy G. Brinker promised her dying sister, Susan G. Komen, she would do everything in her power to end breast cancer forever. In 1982, that promise became Susan G. Komen for the Cure and launched the global breast cancer movement. Today, Komen for the Cure is the world's largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists fighting to save lives, empower people, ensure quality care for all and energize science to find the cures. Thanks to events like the Komen Race for the Cure, we have invested nearly \$1 billion to fulfill our promise, becoming the largest source of nonprofit funds dedicated to the fight against breast cancer in the world. For more information about Susan G. Komen for the Cure, breast health or breast cancer, visit

www.komen.org

or call 1-800 I'M AWARE.

Alissa Havens
Senior Manager, Media Advocacy
American Cancer Society
(202) 661-5772
alissa.havens@cancer.org
