



THE SOCIETAL IMPACT OF PAIN – A ROAD MAP FOR ACTION”



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Recent Antecedents

- Human Rights Watch 2009
- IASP 2010

The Societal Impact of Pain – A Road Map For Action

- Background Text
- Action Items
- Endorsements of written document
- Actionable items for nations and EU

“Please, do not make us suffer any more...” Access to Pain Treatment as a Human Right

2009

Recommendations

The pain treatment gap is an international human rights crisis that needs to be addressed urgently both at the international and national level. Therefore, Human Rights Watch makes the following recommendations to governments around the world:

General

- Establish, where this has not yet been done, a working group on palliative care and pain management ...

Ensuring an Effective Supply System

- Submit, in a timely fashion, realistic estimates for the need of controlled medications to the INCB...

Ensuring Instruction for Healthcare Workers

- Ensure adequate instruction for healthcare workers, including doctors, nurses, and pharmacists, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level...

Declaration of Montreal 2010

Declaration that Access to Pain Management is a Fundamental Human Right

In order to assure these rights, we recognize the following obligations:

1. The **obligation of governments** and all health care institutions, ..., to **establish laws, policies, and systems** that will help to promote, ..., the **access of people in pain to fully adequate pain management**.
Failure to establish such laws, policies, and systems **is unethical and a breach of the human rights** of people harmed as a result.
2. The **obligation of all health care professionals** in a treatment relationship with a patient, ..., to **offer to a patient in pain the management** that would be offered by a reasonably careful and competent health care professional in that field of practice.
Failure to offer such management is a **breach of the patient's human rights**.

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In 2001, the European Federation of the International Association for the Study of Pain Chapters (EFIC) published its Declaration on Pain which called on national governments and the EU Institutions to increase the level of awareness of the societal impact of pain.

Ten years on from the EFIC Declaration on Pain, national and EU policy **action has been very limited**. At the same time, basic and clinical science have demonstrated the **feasibility of pathways out of pain** for many types of acute and chronic pain, but health care systems currently do not guarantee general access to these.

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According to the 2007 Eurobarometer survey on “Health in the European Union”^[1], almost one third of respondents experience musculo-skeletal pain which affects their day-to-day life.

The burden of suffering that pain imposes on individuals and the enormous costs that society has to bear not only by healthcare systems but also the social, economic and employment sectors only illustrate the urgency for European governments and the EU Institutions to act and to **put, as a priority, the societal impact of pain on their policy agenda.**

^[1] Eurobarometer survey on “Health in the European Union”, Special Eurobarometer 272e, September 2007 http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_publication/eb_health_en.pdf

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We call on European governments and the EU Institutions to:

1. Acknowledge that **pain is an important factor limiting the quality of life** and should be **a top priority of the national health care system**.
2. **Activate patients**, their family, relatives and care-givers through the **availability of information** and access to pain diagnosis and management.
3. **Raise awareness** of the medical, financial and social **impact that pain** and its management has on the patients, their family, care-givers, employers, and the healthcare system.
4. **Raise awareness** of the importance of prevention, diagnosis and management of pain amongst all **healthcare professionals**, notably through further **education**.

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We call on European governments and the EU Institutions to:

5. Strengthen **pain research** (basic science, clinical, epidemiological) as a priority in **EU framework programme** and in equivalent research **road maps at national** and EU level, addressing the societal impact of pain and the burden of chronic pain on the health, social, and employment sectors.
6. Establish an **EU platform** for the exchange, comparison and benchmarking of **best practices** between member states on pain management and its impact on society.
7. Use the EU platform to monitor trends in pain management, services, and outcomes and provide **guidelines to harmonize** effective levels of **pain management** to improve the **quality of life of European Citizens**.

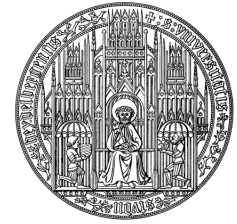
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This “Road Map for Action” to address the societal impact of pain in the EU has been endorsed by the following organisations and was signed at the Symposium “Societal Impact of Pain 2011”, 3-4 May 2011, Brussels by the following persons or organisations:





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A “Road Map for Action” to address the societal impact of pain in the EU has been endorsed by 85 organisations and was signed at the Symposium “Societal Impact of Pain 2011”, 3-4 May 2011, Brussels

National plans exist at government level:

France, Portugal, Italy, Scotland

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We call on European governments to:

- Recognize the right of every citizen to have access to pain medicine and palliative care
- Make pain management (diagnosis and treatment) and palliative care a top priority of the national health care system.
- Launch a National Action Plan against Pain.
- Install two separate but interacting networks in the national health system: pain management, palliative care.
- Establish a working group on pain management and palliative care.

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We call on European governments to:

- Make documentation of pain as the fifth vital sign mandatory in all hospitals
- Establish acute pain services in all hospitals
- Establish outpatient acute pain services
- Implement chronic pain treatment plans with adequate wait times and adequate financing (early diagnosis and secondary prevention).
- Install systems to monitor outcomes of pain management and palliative care.

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We call on European governments to:

- Introduce pain medicine as mandatory teaching subject in curricula for physicians, psychologists, nurses and other health care professionals.
- Introduce pain medicine and palliative care as medical (sub)specialties.
- Launch educational programme on pain pathophysiology for the general public (“pain is real”).
- Strengthen pain research (basic science, clinical, epidemiological) as a priority in national research road maps.

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We call on the EU institutions to:

- Recognize the right of every citizen to have access to pain medicine and palliative care
- Establish a working group on pain management and palliative care.
- Strengthen pain research (basic science, clinical, epidemiological) as a priority in EU framework programmes addressing the societal impact of pain and the burden of chronic pain on the health, social, and employment sectors.
- Establish an EU platform for the exchange, comparison and benchmarking of best practices between member states on pain management and its impact on society.
- Use the EU platform to monitor trends in pain management, services, and outcomes and provide guidelines to harmonize effective levels of pain management to improve the quality of life of European Citizens.