

## **OUR BEGINNING: A LOOK AT OUR FIRST STEPS TO INCREASING PATIENT ACCESS TO NON-OPIOIDS**

Because of the urgency of the opioid addiction epidemic, the Voices team has been busy even before our formal launch, using all available opportunities to increase patient and provider access to non-opioid approaches to acute pain management.

Already this year, we have:

- Spearheaded an effort that culminated in 53 Members of Congress signing a letter to Department and Health and Human Service Secretary Azar urging increased utilization of non-opioid approaches to pain management (read the letters [here](#) and our press release [here](#));
- Applauded Medicare Advantage (MA) guidance allowing plans to provide access to alternative pain management approaches, including, but not limited to, peer support services, chiropractic services, acupuncture, psychological services, and therapeutic massage (read our statement [here](#));
- Supported draft guidance from the Department of Health and Human Services best practices in pain management report related to increasing utilization of the wide array of medically relevant and appropriate non-opioid pain management approaches (read our support letter [here](#), [organizational sign-on letter](#), and a [letter from clinicians](#) supporting aspects of the rule);
- Urged the Office of Management and Budget to include separate reimbursement for non-opioid acute pain management approaches in the forthcoming 2020 Outpatient Prospective Payment System rule (read our [letter](#));
- Joined the National Academy of Medicine Action Collaborative on Countering the U.S. Opioid Epidemic to promote the need for policy changes to increase access to and utilization of non-opioid approaches to pain management (read our [commitment statement](#));
- Released a public opinion poll conducted by *Morning Consult* highlighting opinions and perceptions of the opioid epidemic in some states most impacted by the opioid epidemic ([see our poll takeaways here](#));
- Convened an advocacy day in support of increasing access to non-opioid approaches to acute pain management; and
- Launched a social media network to highlight efforts and opportunities for community engagement in our work to prevent opioid addiction before it starts by increasing the availability of non-opioid approaches (see our [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages for more information).