

## ABOUT US

Voices for Non-Opioid Choices (“Voices”) is a nonpartisan coalition dedicated to preventing opioid addiction by increasing patient access to non-opioid therapies and approaches. Voices convenes leaders from patient, provider, industry, public health and other organizations to collaborate with federal policymakers on needed policy solutions to prevent opioid abuse, misuse, and addiction. Acute pain patients, including those experiencing surgery-related pain, often receive powerful medications to manage their pain. The surgical setting, in particular, has become a potential path to long-term opioid use in America. Consider:

- 3.75 million or 9.2% of patients go on to long-term opioid use after a low-risk surgery (e.g. inguinal hernia repair, knee arthroscopy);<sup>1</sup>
- On average, patients receive 80 opioid pills each to manage their pain, whether they need them or not;<sup>2</sup>
- Of the 9.7 million people who misused pain relievers in 2019, 37.5% received the pills from a health care provider, and 50% obtained them from a friend;<sup>3</sup> and
- Nearly 80 percent of heroin users began by abusing prescription pain medications.<sup>4</sup>

Fortunately, this dangerous cycle of abuse is

entirely

preventable. We cannot afford to wait any longer as, just last year, 90,000 Americans died from a drug

overdose.

The time for action is now.

## OUR WORK

We focus on needed policy changes to grow patient and provider access to non-opioid approaches to manage acute pain, where addiction can start.

Our work — and our priorities — are rooted in science and reflect what we understand to be best clinical practices to help patients manage acute pain. Our primary focus is on Congress and federal policymakers whom we urge to:

- Remove existing barriers that inhibit patient and provider access to non-opioid therapies, including by increasing consumer and provider awareness of non-opioid approaches;
- Ensure adequate reimbursement for non-opioid approaches to acute pain management;
- Align clinical guidelines with surgical best practices that promote optimal patient outcomes; and
- Reduce healthcare resource utilization by increasing the availability of non-opioid approaches for patients.

Policymakers have begun to recognize the importance of stopping opioid addiction before it starts. While some progress has been made along this front, including action from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to expand access to non-opioid therapies for certain patients, much more work is needed to ensure that **all** acute pain patients can benefit from such approaches.

Voices and its partners believe that curbing the U.S.

opioid

epidemic requires systemic change — by individuals, providers and in communities. We can have a

meaningful

impact on the opioid epidemic with simple steps designed to prevent addiction in acute pain patients. In doing so,

we

can prevent millions of Americans from becoming long-term opioid users.

# OUR MEMBERS



Acupuncturists Without Borders



# OUR MEMBERS

