

Top Cancer Groups Announce State Pain Policies Evaluation Results

Eight U.S. States Improve their Pain Policies in the Past Year Alone

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 (and to view South Carolinas current grade and report details), visit www.painpolicy.wisc.edu.

Press release taken in its entirety.