



Congressional Testimony Reinforces the Mission of PAINWeek

Congress addresses how U.S. healthcare providers have been inadequately educated to properly assess, diagnose, and manage chronic pain. Preparing frontline practitioners to provide more effective pain management is the overarching mission of PAINWeek, now the largest national conference on pain.

Montclair, NJ ([PRWEB](#)) February 18, 2012 -- Expert testimony heard this week during the first congressional hearing ever held on chronic pain and pain management reaffirms the importance of PAINWeek in addressing this critical public health concern.

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) chaired the meeting of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions to draw attention to what he called an “epidemic” of chronic pain. Harkin stated his belief that the nation’s doctors are being poorly prepared to deal with the challenges of treating chronic pain, and asked “How do we educate our doctors to understand this and make the right kind of diagnosis?”

Contributing testimony to the hearing were Philip Pizzo, MD, dean of the Stanford University School of Medicine, and Lawrence Tabak, DDS, PhD, the principal deputy director of the NIH. Dr. Pizzo, chair of the Institute of Medicine committee that issued the seminal 2011 report, "Relieving Pain in America", observed that “The scope of the problem in pain management is truly daunting”, and noted that the current number of 4,000 pain specialists in the U.S. was “not nearly enough.”

Dr. Tabak stated that "Perhaps the most important modern insight about chronic pain is that chronic pain, no matter how it begins, can become a disease in and of itself" and added "This recognition...has important implications for how we study pain, treat pain and structure our health care to provide care to patients suffering from pain." Dr. Tabak further predicted that the number of people suffering from chronic pain, already estimated at some 116 million- is likely to grow because the U.S. population is getting older, and because of improving survival rates from diseases that are associated with the condition.

Preparing frontline practitioners to provide more effective pain management is the overarching mission of PAINWeek, the largest national conference on pain. In 2011, PAINWeek welcomed over 1500 healthcare practitioners from a variety of medical specialties, compelling evidence of the significant interest in pain management by frontline clinicians. For 2012, PAINWeek is preparing significant enhancements to its course agenda, including a new therapeutic track on the management of pain conditions often associated with diabetes. This track will augment the annual offering of approximately 12 different tracks in the PAINWeek curriculum, the most comprehensive program of certified pain management education available.

About PAINWeek

PAINWeek is the nation’s largest pain conference for frontline practitioners with an interest in pain management. Convening for its 6th year on September 5-8, 2012, in Las Vegas, PAINWeek will again welcome over 1500 physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and other healthcare professionals for a comprehensive program of course offerings, satellite events, and exhibits. Over 100 hours of continuing medical education activities will be presented. To learn more and register for PAINWeek 2012, visit www.painweek.org.

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