



Federal Criminal Penalties for Illegal Trafficking of Prescription Drugs

A position statement from the American Academy of Pain Medicine

The American Academy of Pain Medicine (AAPM) supports criminal penalties for illegal trafficking of controlled substances. The laws and criminal penalties should apply equally to all individuals. The criminal penalties should be appropriately severe and increased if deemed necessary by the criminal justice system.

AAPM is opposed to criminalization of activities incident to the practice of medicine. The inappropriate use of controlled substances, as this reflects a deviation from the standard of care within the legitimate scope of medical practice, should be resolved within the administrative and civil systems.

Any confusion or blurring of the distinction between legitimate medical practice and diversion or illegal trafficking will have a serious negative affect on the legitimate use of controlled substances for pain control and will likely represent an added barrier to sound medical practice for pain relief.

February 2003.



4700 W. Lake Avenue
Glenview, IL 60025-1485
847/375-4731
Fax 877/734-8750
E-mail aapm@amtec.com
Web site www.painmed.org

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