

West Virginia  
Physical Therapy  
Association



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August 7, 2016

The Honorable Patrick Morrissey  
Attorney General of West Virginia  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, Room 6-617  
Charleston, WV 25305

Dear Mr. Attorney General Morrissey:

The West Virginia Physical Therapy Association (WVPTA) is proud to be partnering with your office to address the issue of opioid abuse in WV. We have appreciated the opportunity to review and make suggestions on the guidelines being published out of your office on the prescription and dispensing of opioid medications for pain management.

According to the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) and the *Journal of Pain*, 25 million Americans experience pain on a daily basis. Patients living with acute and chronic conditions alike seek out medical and physical therapy care to control their pain and its influence on their ability to participate in their necessary daily living activities and desired recreation. The APTA has launched a national campaign, #ChoosePT, to inform health care practitioners and the health care consumer of the benefits that physical therapy can make as an alternative to medications in the treatment of painful conditions. Pain relief may be the primary focus of a referral, but patients can also appreciate improvement in their movement, strength, endurance, balance and restoration of lost function needed to perform their activities of daily living. The campaign will hopefully also be a means to prevent the complications of chronic use of opioids such as depression, addiction and progression to other forms of self-medication. We aim to put the ability to control pain into the hands of the patient, instead of in a pill.

Because of these reasons, the WVPTA looks forward to collaborating with your office as well as the other partners involved in providing West Virginians with safe and effective alternatives to pharmacologic pain control when appropriate. It is also our hope that payers will recognize the benefits of non-pharmacologic pain management and include those options in their list of covered services to assure patient access to the available alternatives.

Thank you again for your work on this important initiative. The WVPTA is pleased to work with your office and to bring the #ChoosePT program to WV.

Professionally,

Caterina (Carrie) Abraham PT, DPT, MPH  
President, West Virginia Physical Therapy Association