



December 14, 2015

Mr. Richard A. Samp
Washington Legal Foundation
2009 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 30036

Dear Mr. Samp:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) draft Opioid Prescribing Guideline for Chronic Pain. We appreciate hearing your concerns about the guideline and acknowledge your Freedom of Information Act Request (FOIA) for materials related to it.

Prescription opiates and heroin are devastating families and communities throughout the United States. This epidemic of addiction, overdose, and death was triggered, to a great extent, by prescribing patterns. As a result, there is an urgent need for a prescribing guideline that increases patient safety and still provides effective pain management. CDC is well-positioned to develop such a guideline for clinicians based on scientific evidence.

CDC has followed a six-step process to develop the draft Opioid Prescribing Guideline for Chronic Pain. We used the Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development, and Evaluation method, which promotes transparency and uses four factors to determine recommendations: quality of evidence, balance between desirable and undesirable effects, values and preferences, and costs. The development process has incorporated review and input from experts and a variety of stakeholders, and to be responsive to feedback from our partners, CDC posted a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing a 30-day public comment opportunity. The notice displayed on Friday and the guideline became available for comment starting today. In addition, CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC) is convening its Board of Scientific Counselors (BSC), a chartered Federal Advisory Committee Act committee, to further review and deliberate the guideline. The BSC will meet on January 7, 2016, to consider forming a workgroup charged with reviewing the guideline and any comments received from the public.

CDC will continue to work with our partners on the guideline to help primary care doctors provide safer, more effective care for patients with chronic pain and help reduce misuse, abuse, and overdose from these powerful drugs. As we move forward with fulfilling your FOIA request, please contact the CDC FOIA Office's Public Liaison at (770) 488-6399, if you have any further questions. This response is also being sent to the cosigner of your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Debra Houry".

Debra Houry, MD, MPH
Director, NCIPC, CDC