

Call to Action: Why Canada Needs a National Pain Strategy

Toronto, ON – December 15, 2011 – Chronic pain is an under-treated health crisis affecting an estimated one in five Canadians. Chronic pain is also associated with the worst quality of life as compared with other chronic diseases such as chronic lung or heart disease. It is estimated that the annual cost of chronic pain in Canada is at least \$60 billion dollars causing a large strain on our economy.

Pain is often poorly managed in Canada and this has a major impact on the quality of life and the ability of patients to function. The Canadian Pain Society (CPS) and the Canadian Pain Coalition (CPC) have issued a blueprint to outline the social, economic and personal impact of chronic pain on Canadians and why a national pain strategy is needed.

The strategy will address key target areas including: awareness and education, access, research and ongoing monitoring.

The document has been reviewed and supported by various pain stakeholders such as Health Canada, The Canadian Medical Association, The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and the Canadian Association of Retired Persons to address the gaps that exist in pain management and to minimize its burden on Canadians living with pain, their families and society.

It's time for Canadians to rise up against pain. Canadians will rally in Ottawa on April 24th, 2012 at the first-ever Canadian Pain Summit. It is essential that Canada take a leading role in proceeding with a national pain strategy and that pain patients are part of the solution.

Canadians are urged to visit www.canadianpainsummit2012.ca to sign a declaration in support of the national pain strategy.

Media are encouraged to speak with members of the national pain summit committee to learn more about the goals of the national pain strategy and its importance.

- Who:** Members of the National Pain Summit committee (researchers and clinicians)
- What:** An opportunity to learn about the target areas the national pain strategy will address
- When:** December 15th, 2011 onwards
- Where:** Telephone or in-person interviews

About the Canadian Pain Society (www.canadianpainsociety.ca /@CanadianPain)

The Canadian Pain Society has been a chapter of the International Association for the Study of Pain since 1982. The aim of the CPS is to foster and encourage research on pain mechanisms and pain syndromes and to help improve the management of patients with acute and chronic pain by bringing together the basic scientists and health professionals of various disciplines and backgrounds who have an interest in pain research and management.

About the Canadian Pain Coalition (www.canadianpaincoalition.ca)

The Canadian Pain Coalition (CPC) is *THE National Voice of People with Pain*. Incorporated in 2004 as a non-profit organization, the CPC is a partnership of pain consumer groups, individuals, health professionals who care for people in pain and scientists studying better ways to treat pain. CPC promotes sustained improvement in the understanding, prevention, treatment and management of all types of pain in Canada. CPC accomplishes this through pain education, awareness activities and advocacy initiatives. CPC obtained the Senate Declaration of National Pain Awareness Week in 2004.

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For further information or to schedule an interview, please contact:

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