



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Leading National Organizations Launch New Coalition to Fight Opioid Addiction by Increasing Access to Opioid Alternatives

Group Aims to Curb Rates of Addiction by Increasing Access to Available Non-Opioid Approaches to Pain Management

WASHINGTON, DC, May 16, 2019 - Today, nearly 25 groups announced the formation of a new coalition dedicated to increasing the availability and utilization of non-opioid approaches to pain management as a way to curb rates of opioid over prescription and addiction in the United States. The coalition, named Voices for Non-Opioid Choices (*Voices*), aims to remove federal policy barriers that inhibit patient access to these needed, safe, and effective treatment approaches.

Opioid use following surgery has become an inadvertent gateway to addiction and dependence. Recent research shows that nearly 3 million Americans per year go on to persistent opioid use following initial exposure due to surgery, meaning they are still taking opioids three to six months after their procedure. *Voices* and its partners believe that increased access to and utilization of non-opioids can help these patients and reduce rates of addiction by minimizing unnecessary exposure to opioids.

In fact, new public polling research released by *Voices* and the Society for Opioid Free Anesthesia (SOFA) revealed that 85 percent of U.S. health professionals saw opioid addiction as a major problem in this country and 88 percent agreed that increasing access to non-opioid approaches would help address the epidemic. Further, the poll revealed nearly universal support (96 percent of health professionals polled) for the utilization of non-opioid approaches, which are widely viewed by the health community as being better for patients. The poll was conducted by Morning Consult among a national sample of 500 health professionals via online interviews on behalf of *Voices* and SOFA.

“This poll reinforces the need for and value of a coalition like *Voices*, which aims to increase provider and patient access to non-opioid approaches to pain management and, in the process, address rising rates of opioid addiction in the United States,” said Tom Baribeault, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of SOFA and co-sponsor of the poll.

As a nonpartisan coalition, *Voices* and its partners believe that curbing the opioid epidemic requires a systemic change. “This new collaboration raises the profile of an overlooked aspect of the opioid epidemic,” said Marcia Lee Taylor, Executive Vice President of External and Government Relations at the Center on Addiction, a founding member of the *Voices* coalition. “We need non-opioid options for all Americans, especially the 23 million in recovery and countless families when it comes to medical interventions and pain relief. In addition, we need to reduce our dependence on opioids to ensure that all patients have a wider range of options when they are managing pain. By collaborating with *Voices*, we can promote federal policy changes to make sure these families can get the care they need.”

“The American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) is proud to be a part of this new, powerful collaboration,” said AANA President Garry Brydges, DNP, MBA, ACNP-BC, CRNA, FAAN. “In addition to promoting needed, non-opioid approaches, we must ensure that patients can be treated by the plethora of qualified professionals who are specially trained to help patients cope with pain without the need for high volumes of opioids. We are happy to join with *Voices* in advocating towards this important, shared goal.”

The members of *Voices* represent leading provider, patient advocacy, addiction, and health care advocacy organizations in the United States and include groups such as American Nurses Association, American Psychological Association, the Center on Addiction, Healthcare Leadership Council, and many others. For a full list of the members of *Voices*, and to learn more about the coalition’s work, please visit www.nonopioidchoices.org.

About Voices for Non-Opioid Choices

Voices for Non-Opioid Choices is a nonpartisan coalition dedicated to preventing opioid addiction before it starts by increasing patient access to non-opioid therapies and approaches to manage acute pain. To learn more visit www.nonopioidchoices.org or follow [@nonopioidchoice](https://twitter.com/nonopioidchoice) on Twitter.

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