

An Overview of Pain in Canada

Pain is common. **One in five** Canadians suffer from chronic pain. It accounts for **10-16%** of emergency department visits.

Pain is expensive. Chronic pain is the most common cause of disability and costs approximately **\$60 billion** each year in lost work hours and healthcare.

Pain is not well-treated. Limited pharmacological treatments are available, and optimal physical and psychological strategies are often not covered.

Pain is not well-understood. Less than **1%** of the CIHR budget is dedicated to pain research.

About the National Pain Centre

The Michael G. DeGroot National Pain Centre was established in 2010 through a generous gift from Michael G. DeGroot. The centre draws on McMaster's expertise in evidence-based medicine to identify, collate, review, revise, update and develop clinical practice guidelines for the treatment of chronic pain. Guidelines will then be disseminated, using best practice techniques of knowledge translation.

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**CANADIAN
PAIN CARE
FORUM**

About the Canadian Pain Care Forum

Inspired by similar initiatives in the United States, the Canadian Pain Care Forum was established, in 2016, to:

- (1) provide a forum for the exchange of information and ideas to further the general education of members regarding public policy issues surrounding the treatment of pain, and
- (2) provide a forum to coordinate and focus commitments to action - all voluntary - regarding the broad range of public policy issues that can and do affect the treatment of pain.

The Canadian Pain Care Forum is committed to improving the understanding and knowledge of member organizations and to promote coordinated actions on common interest public policy issues.

Becoming a Member of the Canadian Pain Care Forum

Meeting throughout the year, the Canadian Pain Care Forum is open to all organizations who have demonstrated interest in and desire to improve national and/or provincial pain care public policy - respectful debate and differing opinions are welcome.

Membership has grown to more than 125 people, representing over 85 organizations from across the country. Approximately 40 members participate regularly in the forums, either in person or by teleconference.

If you or a representative from your organization would like to attend the next Canadian Pain Care Forum, please contact: npc@mcmaster.ca

Developing a National Pain Strategy for Canada

Need for a Pain Strategy

The McMaster Health Forum convened a deliberative dialogue, in December 2017, on the subject of developing a national pain strategy for Canada. The dialogue brought together 24 participants from across Canada to examine the problem, elements of a comprehensive approach for addressing it, and key implementation considerations.

Framing chronic pain only in relation to the opioid crisis is not conducive to long-term solutions. There are limitations in existing programs and services for effectively managing and preventing chronic pain. A Canadian Pain Strategy can help achieve better care, prevention and education, research and implementation, advocacy and coordination.

Other Successful Canadian Strategies

Canadian strategies have worked in the past. Examples include:

- **Canadian Partnership Against Cancer**
 - Addressed a struggling system by encouraging sharing of evidence and best practices across the country, with continuous measurement of the performance of the cancer control system
- **Canadian Mental Health Association**
 - Implemented tactics to strengthen voice, provide quality services and enhance organizational health

