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National Attorneys General Show Courage and Leadership in Opioid Crisis

Letter to America's Health Insurance Plans calls for prioritizing non-opioid pain options.

Washington, DC (October 4, 2017) — The Integrative Health Policy Consortium (IHPC) applauds the September 18 letter, signed by 37 State Attorneys General, from the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) asking its insurance company members to review their payment and coverage policies and revise them to encourage healthcare providers to choose alternatives to prescribing opioid pain relievers. The letter further urged insurance companies to adopt incentive structures that reward the use of non-opioid and non-pharmacologic pain management therapies.

“This is a big step forward with the potential to save millions of lives and billions of dollars,” said Leonard A. Wisneski, MD, FACP, chairman of IHPC. “Those in pain should not be denied proven and effective non-opioid options because of lack of coverage by insurers. Opioid addiction must be prevented. Research shows that nonpharmacological interventions, such as chiropractic, acupuncture and massage therapy, can be just as, if not more effective for the treatment of certain pain. These options need to be prioritized for providers and patients.”

State and local governments alone spend nearly \$8 billion a year on criminal justice costs related to opioid abuse. Attorneys General, who serve as the chief legal officers in states and territories are committed to consumer protection for patients against unfair or deceptive business practices, and to ensure that insurers provide consumers with transparent information about their products and services.

The state Attorneys General are also investigating whether or not manufacturers misled doctors and patients about the efficacy and addictive power of opioids through labeling and marketing. IHPC joins their call for America's Health Insurance Plans and its members to respond by changing coverage for non-opioid care options. Read a full copy of the NAAG letter [here](#).

About the Integrative Health Policy Consortium

The Integrated Healthcare Policy Consortium is the national policy and advocacy voice of integrative health and wellness healthcare professionals. Its Partner For Health members represent 23 health professional associations as the voice of more than 600,000 healthcare providers. IHPC functions as a critical watchdog and monitor of federal agencies charged with overseeing America's health and health research needs, working towards eliminating barriers to health. IHPC Chair Dr. Wisneski is a Clinical Professor of Medicine at George Washington University Medical Center, Adjunct Faculty at Georgetown University, and is on faculty at The University of Colorado. He has published over 30 scientific articles and a landmark textbook, “The Scientific Basis of Integrative Health.”

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