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## **PHYSICIANS GAIN NEW TOOL TO BETTER MANAGE ACUTE AND CHRONIC PAIN**

*The Federation of State Medical Boards' New Handbook Assists Physicians  
in Delivering Optimal Care to Patients in Pain*

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Dallas – The Federation of State Medical Boards Research and Education Foundation (FSMB) is offering every physician a new handbook to help them better manage patients' acute or chronic pain. [\*Responsible Opioid Prescribing: A Physician's Guide\*](#) offers real-world explanations and practical strategies that address issues of undertreatment of pain, risk of prescription drug abuse and improved patient care.

FSMB is providing state medical boards, on a state-by-state basis, as funds are raised, with print copies of the book to distribute to the approximately 750,000 licensed physicians in the United States. The handbooks can be customized to include state-specific policies, rules and regulations, and statutes.

“State medical boards have been very aggressive about adopting guidelines for controlled substances,” said Lisa Robin, senior vice president of Member Services for the FSMB. “At the same time, physicians need useful steps that will help them better manage their patients' pain. This handbook bridges the gap between guidelines and practice and is an important resource to improve patients' quality of life.”

Based on FSMB's [\*Model Policy for the Use of Controlled Substances for the Treatment of Pain\*](#), the handbook recommends steps for:

- Ensuring effective patient evaluation
- Creating a function-based treatment plan with actionable patient goals
- Obtaining a written patient-physician agreement that includes informed consent and significant patient education
- Overseeing periodic review that focuses on progress toward functional goals
- Making specialist referrals and managing difficult patients
- Creating and maintaining clear, consistent, transparent and detailed documentation
- Remaining up-to-date on federal and state controlled substance policies

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## **FSMB Handbook/ Add One**

“Although effective pain management and drug abuse risk reduction are still evolving areas of medicine, physicians who follow the *Guide*’s recommended strategies can be confident they are prescribing appropriately and need not fear regulatory sanctions,” said Lyle Kelsey, executive director of the Oklahoma State Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision, one of the first states to distribute the handbook.

Written by Scott M. Fishman, M.D., chief of the Division of Pain Medicine, Department of Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine, University of California, Davis, the handbook was overseen by an advisory board of leaders in pain medicine, relevant non-profit organizations, and state and national government regulatory agencies.

“The strategies we provide meet the expectations of not only physicians and their patients, but those of patient advocacy groups, medical societies and law enforcement as well,” said Dr. Fishman.

FSMB is providing physicians additional pain management resources through its new related website, <http://www.fsmb.org/pain>. The website offers many resources and tools, including:

- Updated pain policies and regulations for each state
- Links to updated information from the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the Food and Drug Administration
- Pain assessment tools

*The [Federation of State Medical Boards](#) (FSMB) is a national not-for-profit organization representing the 70 medical boards of the United States and its territories. The FSMB’s mission is to continuously improve the quality, safety and integrity of health care by developing and promoting high standards for physician licensure and practice.*

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