



THE FLORIDA SOCIETY OF ANESTHESIOLOGISTS

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April 28, 2017

Office of Governor Rick Scott
State of Florida, the Capitol
400 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Scott,

As the professional organization of anesthesiologists in the state of Florida, the Florida Society of Anesthesiologists (FSA) would like to express its support for your recent announcement to convene a series of workshops exploring potential solutions to the devastating opioid addiction epidemic which is occurring in all of our communities. As the group of physicians who legally prescribe and administer more fentanyl (intravenous; during surgery) than any other group of physicians in the state, we certainly feel both qualified and committed to providing input on the illicit use of this synthetic opioid that is at the top of the list of havoc-wreaking drugs.

We are witnessing first-hand the devastation this phenomenon has on both individuals and their families as these patients present to the operating room for surgeries attempting to ameliorate the suffering caused by the abuse of these drugs on their bodies. We are also involved in the birthing of babies to addicted mothers and watch as these newborns are swiftly transported to the neonatal intensive care unit to begin a course of morphine themselves in order to treat the Narcotic Addiction Syndrome (NAS) that they are born with, and which would kill them if left untreated.

As an organization comprised of individuals, we are committed to the safely delivered anesthetic care of patients under any circumstances; suffice it to say that this epidemic of addicted patients has complicated that care to no small extent.

We at the FSA are committed to finding local and state solutions to this multi-factorial crisis by participating and doing the hard work of identifying solutions agreeable to all of the parties involved in the decision making. Awareness, public education, law enforcement, improving treatment options; these and other strategies must be employed to slow the carnage in our hospitals and our communities.

All anesthesiologists and all facets of anesthesia are affected by this epidemic, make no mistake about it. Private practice and academic centers experience this nightmare clinical storm routinely in both settings. Pain specialists, obstetric and cardiac anesthesiologists...no one is spared from this phenomenon.

Finding solutions to this hydra will require major commitments from many people and organizations. We at the FSA are on board with your initiative and are asking, "What can we do to help?" Please utilize our expertise and reach out to us for our input.

Thank you for your consideration, good luck and congratulations for bringing to the forefront one of the most important issues of our time.

Respectfully,

The Executive Committee of the Florida Society of Anesthesiologists Board of Directors

Patient Centered, Physician Driven