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The suffering of people in pain and their clinicians have endured since the 2016 CDC Guidelines for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain were released is impossible to summarize.

We know 527+ new laws have been implemented across the US, using the "Guidelines" as their justification. States have used the 2016 Guideline to embed them as "rules" as EHR's embedded them as well. Payers use them as hard metrics, refusing to cover medications in excess of the GL, & every prescriber must adhere. If a prescriber is not "in line" with the 2016 Guideline they will receive a threatening letter from the state medical board or their employer, comparing them to other practitioners in their area and threatening them with criminal actions if they don't "fix" their prescribing habits immediately. Worse, the threat of criminal prosecution, civil asset forfeiture, and jail terrifies all practitioners who run the risk of prescribing outside the CDC "Guidelines." The threat of DEA/DOJ criminal accusations looms over every decision made by every prescribing clinician. This broad freeze, called "the chilling effect," terrorizes medical professionals across the nation.

What was gained by this terrorization of physicians and abandonment of patients? Did patients benefit from this practice? Did the CDC ensure they tracked the outcome of every person affected by decisions to reduce or eliminate their opioid prescriptions? No. But we all know that no one has benefited. Patients in pain have been abandoned across the country, and people with SUD continue with more dangerous drugs and death.

The only remedy is to retract all of the 2016 Guidelines. The errors and violations of Federal Laws and Rules make the entire document in violation CDC's and Federal Rules. The innumerable conflicts of interests, failure to adhere to CDC's own ethical guidelines, invitation of "inner circle" participants without any expertise in pain management, was all unethical. Allowing Roger Chou to write both Systematic Reviews & both Guidelines; include as experts the members of PROP, the astroturfing group of the opioid litigation; using that same cartel of authors/contributors/peer reviewers/core experts/etc. from PROP showed the CDC had a planned narrative from the beginning.

Examples:

CDC had one employee, Chad Helmick, M.D., whose career was dedicated to people with chronic pain across the United States. Of all CDC employees, one would think Dr. Helmick would have been included in the writing of these guidelines. Yet, he wasn't included in any of the preparing, writing, or publishing. This, and hundreds of other examples, prove just how much this guideline was politically motivated. As such, it must be retracted.

The CDC graded poor/low quality evidence yet made as high-quality recommendations. This is highly improper and unethical and against its own rules. The entire house of cards (the 2016 and its successor, the 2022 GL) must be retracted.

The Systematic Reviews ignored or chose not to include multiple studies that should have been included, as per CDC rules. Those studies not chosen showed the benefits of opioids & the safety of their use.

The manuscript by Peppin and Coleman detailed the flaws in the evidence CDC cited & showed the impossibility of the statistics they used. This, like all examples, shows intentional dishonesty and institutional bias.

There isn't enough room to detail all the evidence against the 2016 Guideline here. Contact me for more.