

David Joranson, MSSW
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David Joranson recently retired as Director of the Pain & Policy Studies Group (PPSG) and continues work on special projects. David came to the pain field from a career in administration of controlled substances policy and diversion control programs. He co-founded the National Association of State Controlled Substances Authorities and the Wisconsin Cancer Pain Initiative, and helped to design a White House Conference on prescription drug misuse, abuse and diversion. As a drug regulator, he became concerned about the regulatory environment for use of essential medications to relieve cancer pain. After founding the PPSG in 1996, the PPSG developed the first systematic approach to evaluate and improve “balance” in federal and state drug control policies, so that efforts to prevent diversion and drug abuse avoid interfering in legitimate medical practice and patient care. PPSG policy research documented wide disparities in state pain policies and a Progress Report Card has shown that states are using PPSG resources to adopt more balanced policies. PPSG’s US program is now under the direction of Dr. Aaron Gilson. David has advised many national and state groups including the American Cancer Society, the National Association of Attorneys General, the Federation of State Medical Boards, individual statemedical boards, state and community pain initiatives and end of life care groups. He and PPSG staff members have contributed many peer-reviewed articles and book chapters; he is a member of the editorial advisory boards of several journals. PPSG’s work is available on its website at www.painpolicy.wisc.edu.

The PPSG International Program has developed methods and resources now being used around the world to achieve more balanced national drug control policies and improved access to pain relief medicines. PPSG prepared WHO Guidelines on Achieving Balance in National Opioids Control Policies. They were endorsed by the U.N. International Narcotics Control Board and are being used to evaluate national narcotics control laws and regulations. PPSG established the International Pain Policy Fellowship, an Internet course, and has contributed to successful policy reform projects in Asia, Europe and Latin America, including in Italy, India, Mexico and Romania. PPSG is collaborating on opioid availability for African countries with the African Palliative Care Association, the Foundation for Hospices in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. David is a member of the Institute of Medicine Committee on Cancer Control in Low and Middle Income Countries, the International Association for the Study of Pain and the Indian Association of Palliative Care.

David’s work has been recognized by the Surgeon General of the US, the National Association of State Controlled Substances Authorities, and the American Academy of Pain Medicine. He received the Marie Nyswander Humanitarian Award for Extraordinary Efforts to Enhance the Compassionate Care of Addiction and Pain, the Vittorio Ventafridda Award for outstanding international achievement in palliative care, the Distinguished Service Award and the John and Emma Bonica Public Service Award from the American Pain Society, and the Distinguished Service Award from the American Cancer Society.