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Martha Maurer, Assistant Scientist, has been working with the Pain & Policy Studies Group (PPSG) for 11 years. She has had experience working with both the U.S. and International Programs.

Dr. Maurer's experience with the U.S. Program at the PPSG has involved policy analysis, evaluation and being a member of a team that performs content analyses of policies and integrates the results into an historical policy context. She was instrumental in developing several editions of "Achieving Balance in Federal & State Pain Policy," reports which have been used by healthcare professionals and state policymakers to improve their policy environment related to pain management. She was also involved in producing a report that summarized policy data in an effort to rank states according to their pain policy environments. Currently, Dr. Maurer continues her involvement with the U.S. Program as part of the research team evaluating changes in state pain policies over the last decade.

As part of the International Program, Dr. Maurer has been involved in efforts to improve opioid availability and patient access to pain medications. She has presented at multi-country workshops, been involved in individual country projects, and most recently, she served as faculty for the International Pain Policy Fellowship. Currently, she is the primary staff person providing technical assistance for a number of fellows.

Dr. Maurer has past experience as the primary staff person coordinating PPSG's work in sub-Saharan Africa and in this capacity has participated in four workshops aimed at improving opioid availability. The first one in 2002 was a World Health Organization (WHO) meeting to develop a community health approach to palliative care for HIV/AIDS and cancer in five sub-Saharan African countries. In 2006, Dr. Maurer participated in a second workshop for six countries in east Africa. This workshop, sponsored by the African Palliative Care Association (APCA), had a similar goal of developing action plans for improving opioid availability. In 2007 and 2008, Dr. Maurer again participated in similar APCA-sponsored workshops involving countries from western Africa and southern Africa.

Dr. Maurer coordinated the development of PPSG's on-line educational course which is about the relationship between government policies that affect the medical availability of opioid analgesics and patients who experience moderate to severe pain. This course provides a synthesis of the critical background material and current methods that have been developed to improve national policies governing the medical availability of essential pain medicines for cancer and HIV/AIDS patients.

Dr. Maurer recently completed her PhD in Social Welfare at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she had a concentration on aging and end-of-life care research. Her doctoral work involved examining a national dataset of hospice care patients looking at predictors of very short lengths of stay in hospice care programs. She also received a master's degree in Social Work and a master's degree in Public Health from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.