

BY APPOINTMENT

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Kimberly Topper
Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (HFD-21)
Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857
Fax: 301-827-6801

Dear Ms. Topper:

Regarding the possibility of exclusion of all physicians, except anesthesiologists, concerning the treatment of pain, I believe this to be absolutely ludicrous. As a practicing neurologist I have seen numerous cases of intractable neuropathic pain. This has occurred over the past 20 years, and I alone have treated numerous patients in my office. Some patients were treated simply because no one else was available at the time, as well as no one had the knowledge in pain management to treat these patients.

Over time, pain management has become a sub-specialty. It is occupied primarily by anesthesiologists, who work directly in conjunction with specialists such as myself. In my opinion, it would appear almost impossible for one specialty to handle all complaints related to pain problems. I also believe if individuals were properly trained, and have experience in the management of patients with severe pain symptoms, as well as disabilities that result from pain, this would be the best case scenario. It would also be to everyone's advantage for various physicians to cooperate with using the expertise of one to supplant the expertise of another.

I hope this will be sufficient for your needs regarding the support and management of pain with our patients.

If additional information is necessary, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Respectfully,



Vincent J. DiGiovanni, M.D.

VJD/md