

## PubMed

U.S. National Library of Medicine  
National Institutes of Health



Display Settings: Abstract

[Ann Oncol.](#) 2010 Mar;21(3):615-26.

# Formulary availability and regulatory barriers to accessibility of opioids for cancer pain in Europe: a report from the ESMO/EAPC Opioid Policy Initiative.

Cherny NI, Baselga J, de Conno F, Radbruch L.

Cancer Pain and Palliative Medicine Unit, Department of Oncology, Shaare Zedek Medical Center, Jerusalem, Israel.  
[nathancherny@yahoo.com](mailto:nathancherny@yahoo.com)

**BACKGROUND:** Many patients in Europe do not receive adequate relief of pain because of excessive regulatory restrictions on the availability and accessibility of opioids. This is a major public health problem. The aim of the study is to evaluate and report on opioid availability and the legal and regulatory barriers to accessibility across the countries of Europe. **METHODS:** European Society for Medical Oncology and European Association for Palliative Care national representatives reported data regarding survey of opioid availability and accessibility. Formulary adequacy is evaluated relative to the World Health Organization (WHO) essential drugs list and the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care list of essential medicines for palliative care. Overregulation is evaluated according to the guidelines for assessment of national opioid regulations of the WHO. **RESULTS:** Data were reported on the availability and accessibility of opioids for the management of cancer pain in 21 Eastern European countries and 20 Western European countries. Results are presented describing the availability and cost of opioids for cancer pain in each surveyed country and nine forms of regulatory restrictions. **CONCLUSIONS:** Using standards derived from the WHO and International Narcotics Control Board, this survey has exposed formulary deficiencies and excessive regulatory barriers that interfere with appropriate patient care in many European countries. There is an ethical and public health imperative to address these issues.

PMID: 20176694 [PubMed - in process]

Publication Types

[LinkOut - more resources](#)

You are here: [NCBI](#) > [Literature](#) > [PubMed](#)

[Write to the Help Desk](#)