

# Findings from US Pain Foundation Survey



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**#AACIPM**



***Do our policies align  
with best practices?***

*Findings from a survey on barriers to pain care*

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Nicole Hemmenway, CEO, U.S. Pain Foundation

# About US Pain Foundation



The mission of U.S. Pain Foundation is to **empower, educate, connect, and advocate** for people living with chronic conditions that cause pain, as well as their caregivers and health care providers.

# Our programs

- **Direct Support**

- Pain Connection support groups
- Pediatric Pain Warrior program

- **Awareness & Empowerment**

- INvisible Project magazine
- Pain Awareness Month
- Ambassador Network

- **Educational**

- Pain Education Portal (PEP) Talk webinars
- Online and print resources
- MyPainPlan.org

- **Advocacy**

- State
- Federal

# Survey scope

- **1,581 individuals responded**
- Conducted between Aug. 4 and 13, 2020
- To qualify, respondents had to answer “yes” to living with chronic pain
  - Defined as pain that persists most or every day for six months or more.

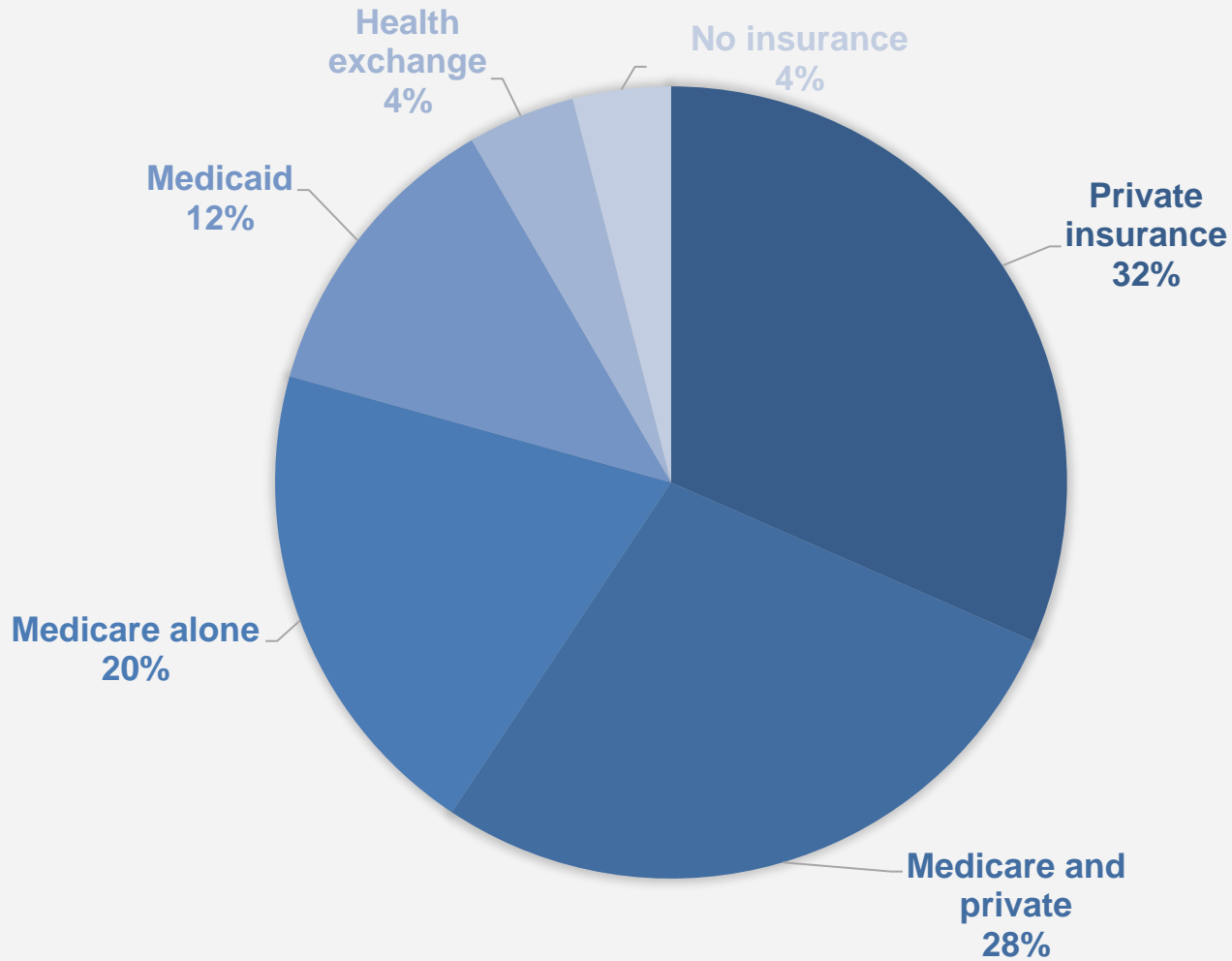


# Demographics

- All 50 states plus Washington, D.C., represented
- Majority female (**81.7%**), white (**85.2%**) and over 45 years old (**78.6%**)
  - *Reflective of pain population... or of patient nonprofit reach?*
- Insurance: largely Medicare (**47.8%**)



# Demographics: insurance



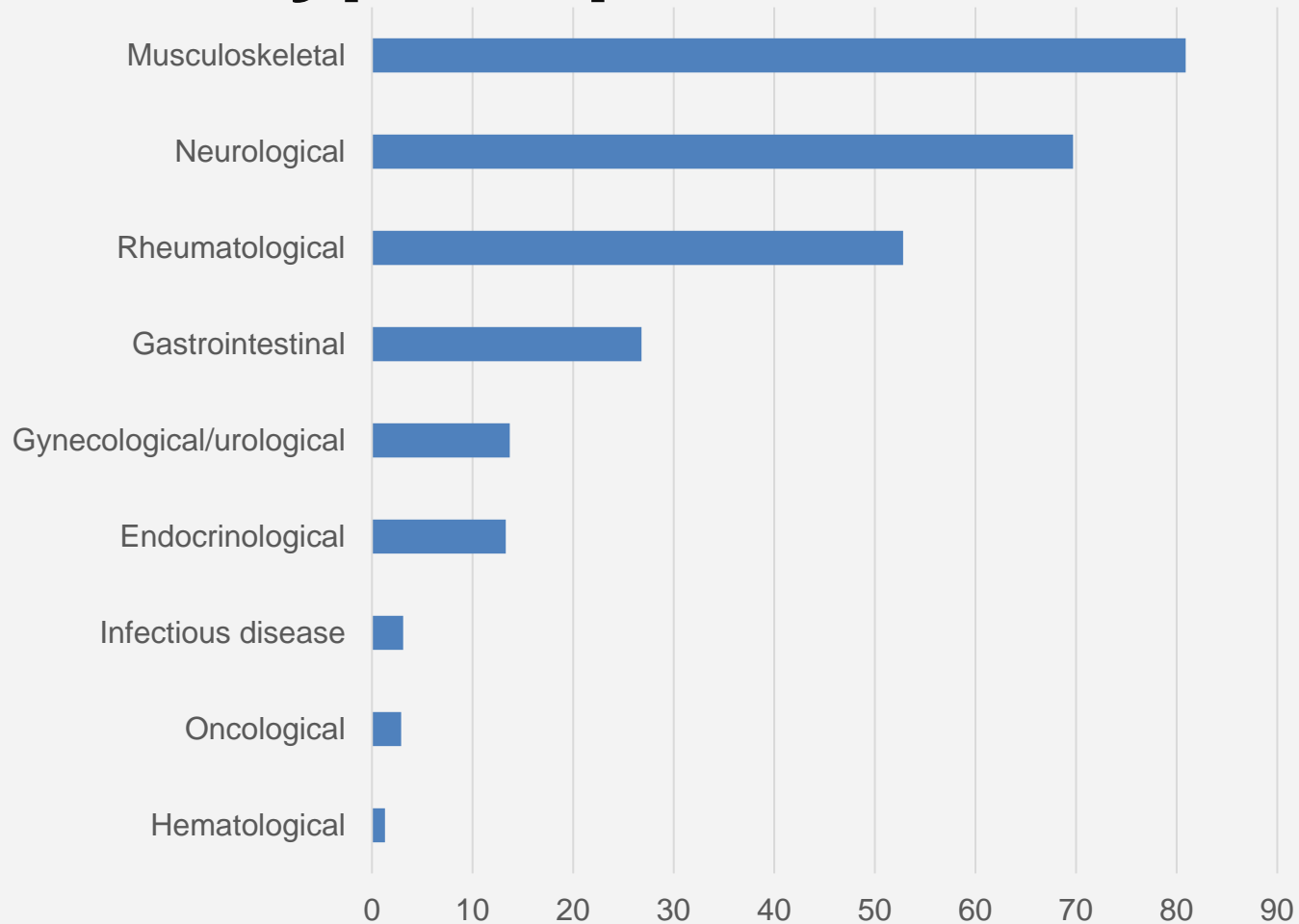
# Type of pain

- **Long-term, severe, disabling**
  - **74.1%** lived with pain  $\geq 10$  years
  - **58.4%** rated their pain as  $\geq 7$
  - **82.1%** said they consider themselves to be disabled
    - **49.6%** receive Social Security Disability Insurance





# Type of pain: causes



# Key takeaways

1. The reality on the ground is that most patients **lack access** to multidisciplinary and integrative pain care

2. **Cost** is the biggest barrier to pain management

3. Accelerated access to **telehealth** has been a silver lining of pandemic

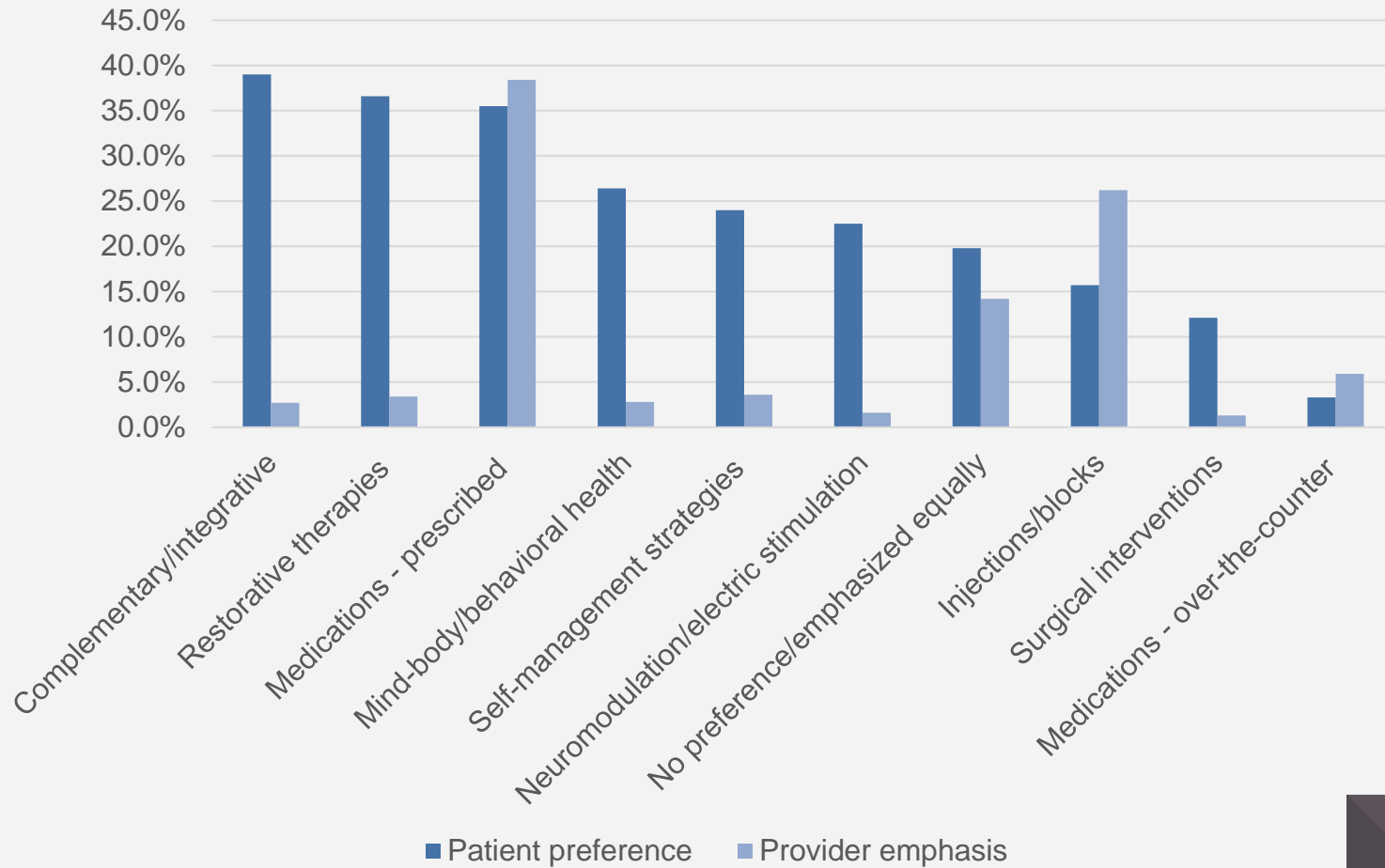
4. **Behavioral health** and pain must be further addressed

# Approach to care doesn't necessarily align with best practices

- **54%** report being seen at a pain clinic or center
- **32.9%** not able to see pain physicians due to barriers such as cost
- **76.5%** of those individuals report the clinic or center **only offers pain doctors**, not multidisciplinary specialists (social workers, psychologists, PTs, nutritionists, etc.)



# What patients wish was emphasized most vs. what they feel is emphasized most

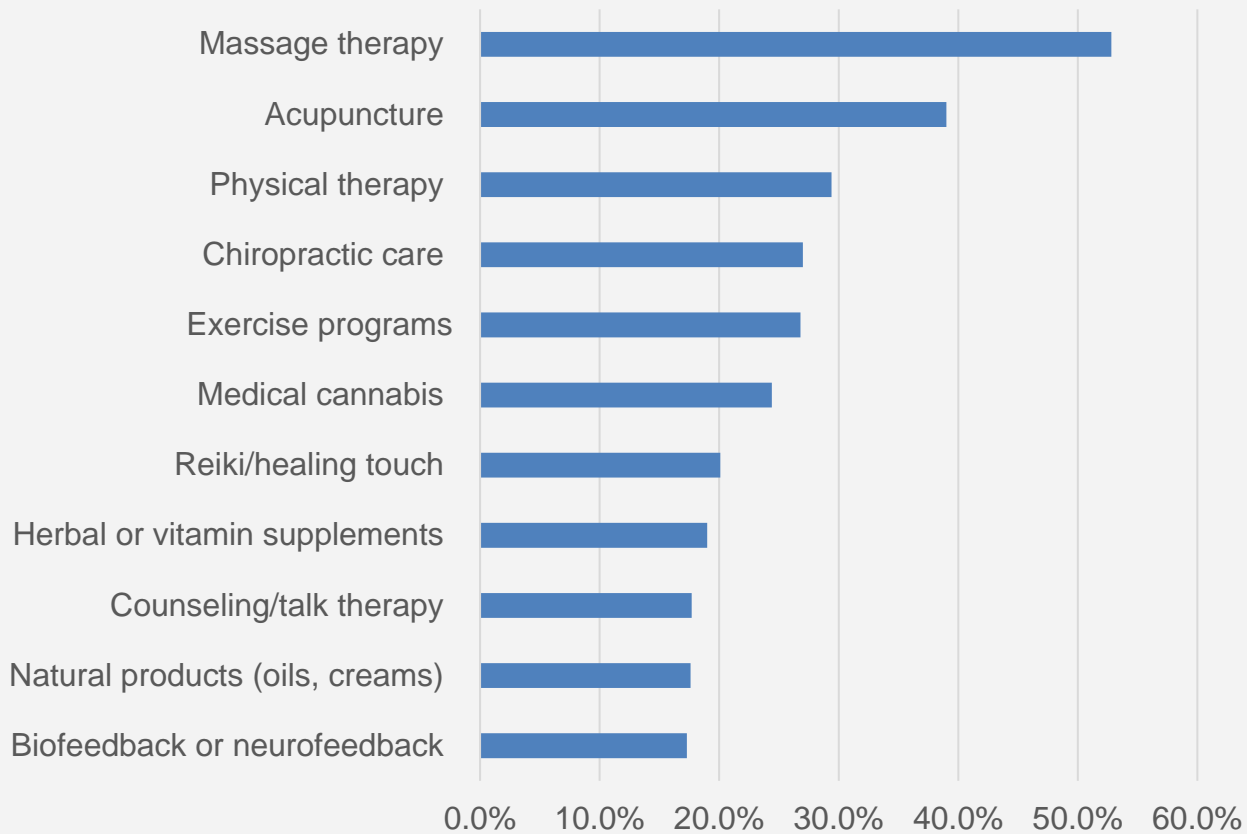


# Cost is huge barrier to treatment

- **76.5%** said cost prevented them from accessing one or more treatment options
- **51.9%** of those with insurance said **high copays** prevented them from accessing treatment
- **65.4%** said **insurance limits** (eg. prior authorization, annual caps) prevented them from accessing treatment



# Cost most often a barrier to...



## Under 15%:

- Mindfulness/stress reduction programs
- Specialty/compounded meds
- CBT
- Art/music/dance therapy
- OT
- Intravenous medications
- Psychiatric care
- Prescribed medications - opioids Nerve blocks

## Under 10%:

- Other injections/procedures
- TENS units
- Trigger point injections
- Virtual reality programs 9.20%
- Prescribed medications - nonopioids
- Other electrical or neuro stimulation therapies (PENS, PEMF, PNFS, IFC)
- Medical foods
- Spinal cord stimulators
- Epidural injections
- Topical medications
- Botox injections
- Neurolysis or nerve ablation
- Heat and cold therapy
- Over-the-counter medications

# Treatments most commonly prohibited by insurance

## Limits or requirements\*:

- **physical therapy** (33%)
- **massage** (30.9%)
- **chiropractic care** (25.6%)
- **acupuncture** (25.6%)
- **opioids** (20%)

## High copays:

- **physical therapy** (26%)
- **massage** (24.4%)
- **chiropractic care** (21%)
- **acupuncture** (21%)
- **counseling/talk therapy** (16.4%)

\*Prior authorization, annual visit limits

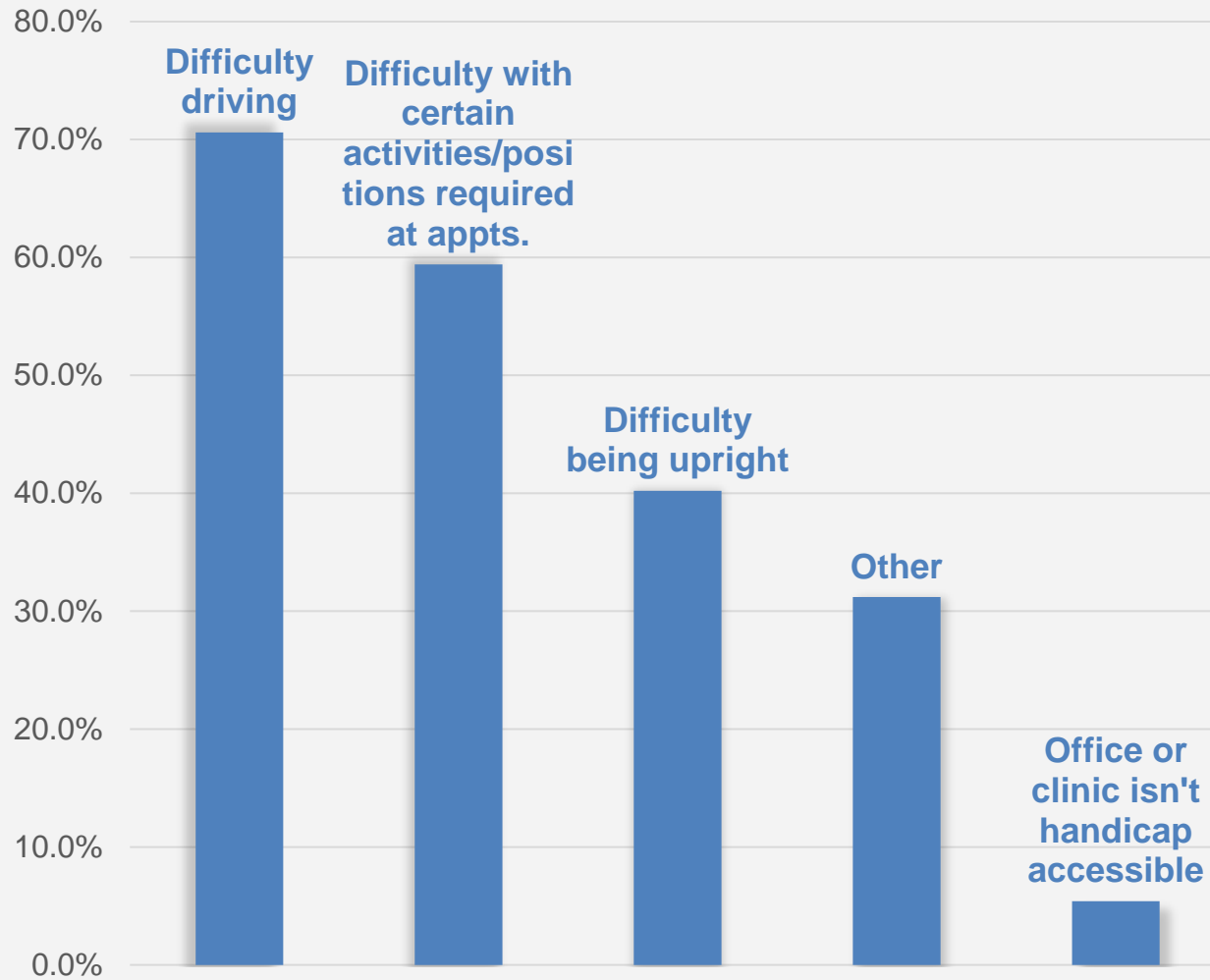
# The value of telehealth

- **50.7%** said **mobility issues** prevented them from accessing treatment
  - Medicare 53%
  - Medicaid 61%
- **33.4%** reported **living in a rural area**
  - An overwhelming majority (**89.9%**) said they would like **telehealth to continue** beyond COVID-19



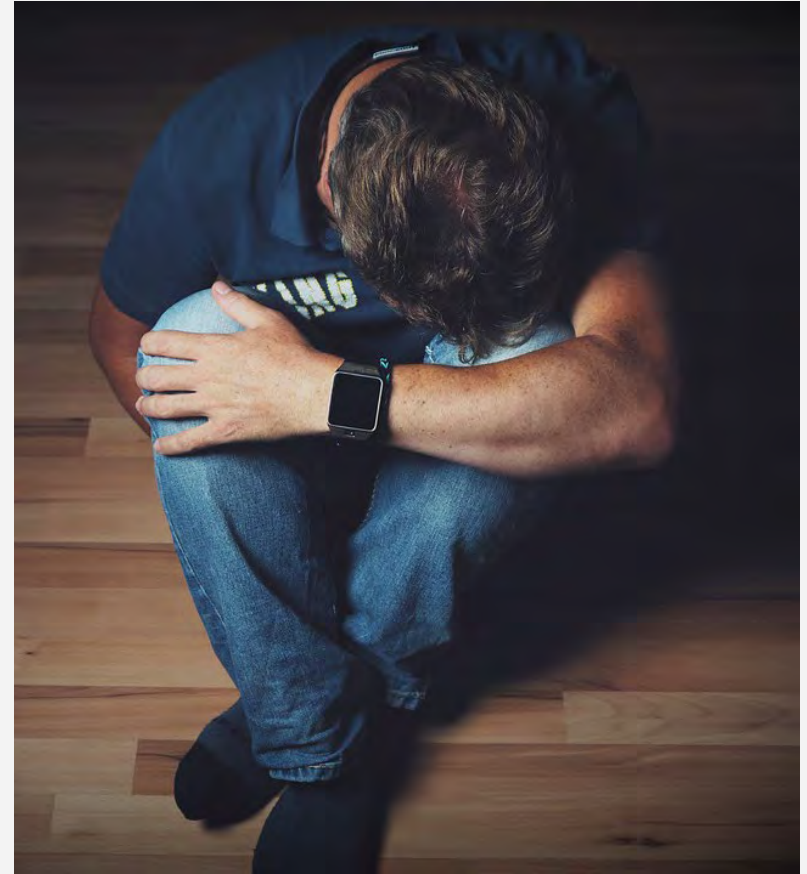


# Types of mobility issues

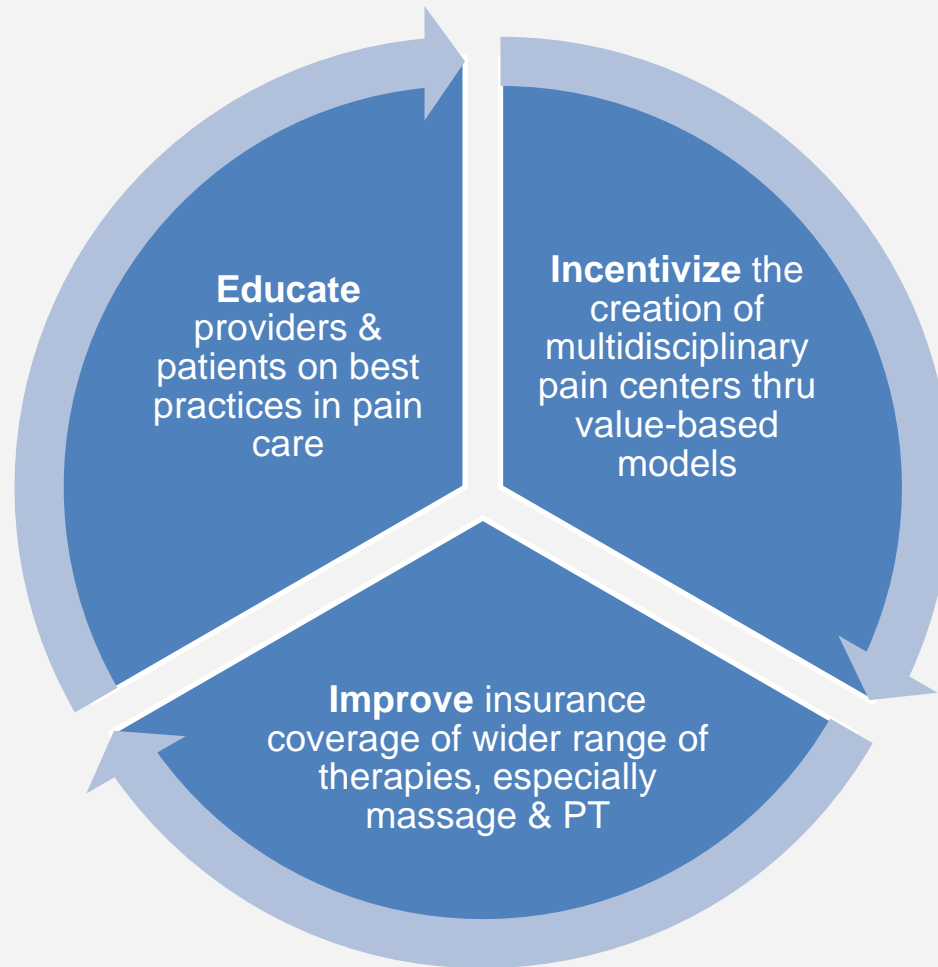


# Mental health must be better addressed

- **26.4%** of respondents wished **mind-body and behavioral health therapies were emphasized more** by their providers
- **20.7%** of respondents living in rural areas **were unable to access support groups** due to their location
- **19.8%** of patients wished they could see, or see **more of, a mental health professional**, but can't because of barriers like cost



# Recommendations



# For more data and analysis

[uspainawarenessmonth.com/survey-access](http://uspainawarenessmonth.com/survey-access)

