

Date: June 19, 2008

Subject: DRC Recommendations to DCC and DHS

To: DHS, DCC, Dean's Office

From: Henry F. Simmons, Jr., MD, Ph.D.
Chairman DRC

At its 06/19/08 meeting, the Drug Review Committee considered the potential toxicity and therapeutic roles of the long acting opioids in the management of adults with chronic pain of non-cancer origin.

Based upon the bulk of the best available evidence concerning fentanyl, methadone, morphine, oxymorphone, and oxycodone the Committee concluded the following:

There is insufficient evidence to conclude in general that any of the agents differ sufficiently in terms of either safety or adverse effects to the extent that it should be stricken from consideration.

There is sufficient evidence to conclude in general that all five agents are efficacious.

In head to head comparisons, there is insufficient evidence to conclude one or more of the long acting opioids are generally superior to the others in reducing pain and improving functional outcomes.

There is insufficient evidence to conclude in general that one agent is more efficacious based upon demographics, comorbidities or adverse drug interactions.

A transdermal preparation should be available to those who cannot ingest their medications.

At least two different oral agents should be available in addition to a transdermal agent.