



# MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY

*Every physician matters, each patient counts.*

October 17, 2016

Stephen B. Corn, MD  
Department of Anesthesiology, Perioperative and Pain Medicine  
Brigham and Women's Hospital  
75 Francis Street  
Boston, MA 02115

Dear Dr. Corn,

I'm happy to provide you with a number of significant updates to the courses jointly provided with the Massachusetts Medical Society and TheAnswerPage.

Since 2013, over 7,000 courses have been completed by physicians and other health professionals for the anesthesiology, pain medicine, opioid prescribing, perioperative medicine, hospital medicine, palliative care and medical statistics content that you developed.

The *Opioid Prescribing Series*, comprised of six modules and hosted on the Massachusetts Medical Society's website, is one of the most popular opioid series reaching physicians and other health care providers in Massachusetts and the majority of states throughout the country. Since 2013, when the *Opioid Prescribing Series* first became available, over 11,000 courses have been completed. With your approval, as part of a collaborative effort with MA Governor Charlie Baker's office, we have been offering this opioid series at no charge to all health care professionals since May 2015.

In addition, the Massachusetts Medical Society has also been linking directly to *The Medical Marijuana-Medical, Legal, Social and Political Issues* series that you developed and host on TheAnswerPage website. This content has provided a valuable resource for clinicians seeking hard to find factual information, as well as for physicians who certify patients for use of medical marijuana.

Most recently, the MMS Committee on Sponsored Programs reviewed and approved for CME credit, the *Comprehensive Cannabis Curriculum* that you developed. The Committee also confirmed that the activity meets the MA Board of Registration in Medicine's definition of risk management study.

I'll end this update with compelling feedback from a learner who participated in the *Opioid Prescribing Series*. In answer to the course evaluation question asking what the learner will change as a result of completing the courses, this physician stated, "I will be sure that all other options are exhausted before starting chronic opiate therapy." This feedback reinforces our objectives for safe opioid prescribing in Massachusetts supported by three studies released earlier this year that show opioid prescribing rates have declined in Massachusetts. The studies were done by [athenahealth](#), the Cambridge-based [Workers' Compensation Research Institute](#), and the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#).

Dr. Corn, we look forward to continuing our joint provider relationship with you and TheAnswerPage to the benefit of physicians and patients.

Best regards,

**Kathleen Bellisle**

Kathleen Bellisle  
Manager of MMS Distance Learning