



NEWS RELEASE

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February is Women in Pain Awareness Month in California

For Grace to Publish a Patient Story Every Day in February to Focus Attention on Gender Bias and the Undertreatment of Women in Pain

Los Angeles, California-- For Grace, a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring the ethical and equal treatment of all women in pain, will call attention to gender bias in the medical community and the undertreatment of women in pain by publishing a Patient Story every day in February as part of Women in Pain Awareness Month.

Women in Pain Awareness Month is dedicated to increasing attention to the unequal treatment of women in pain in California and elsewhere across the U.S. According to the American Chronic Pain Association, pain is the No. 1 cause of adult disability in the U.S. At least one out of six people report living with chronic pain.

"I believe everyone who suffers chronic pain in this country is undertreated—but it is far worse for women. This neglect and abuse from the medical community ravages entire families," says Cynthia Toussaint, founder and spokesperson of For Grace and

author of the bill that launched Women in Pain Awareness Month three years ago.

Continuous, long-term chronic pain has emerged as a devastating public health problem, particularly for women who claim that doctors and nurses often underestimate their pain, or worse, discount it as "emotional," "hormonal," or otherwise not real.

For Grace will put a face on this complex health issue by publishing a different testimonial from their Women In Pain petition each day in February. Since 2002, more than 5000 women have signed and left testimonials on For Grace's Women in Pain Bill of Rights and online petition. For Grace will post the patient stories on their website and engage in a daily email campaign in February targeting media, policymakers and specialists in the pain community.

Toussaint has lived with chronic pain for the past 24 years in the form of a little known pain disease known as Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy. After three years of raising awareness for RSD, Toussaint and For Grace broadened their mission to address gender differences in the treatment of pain. In 2004, Toussaint testified before a California legislative hearing she spearheaded that focused on gender bias and the systemic undertreatment of women in pain.

For more information about For Grace and the Women in Pain Bill of Rights and petition, see:
<http://www.forgrace.org/womeninpain/petition/index.html>.