

Pain Awareness Month Symposium

On September 17, 2010, Pain Connection held its Pain Awareness Month Symposium at its center in Rockville, Maryland. Maryland Secretary of State, John McDonough, opened the event by presenting a Pain Awareness Month Proclamation to Pain Connection on behalf of the State of Maryland. In making this presentation, Secretary McDonough praised Pain Connection's important service to the community and stressed the need for nonprofit organizations to step up their activities during difficult economic times. A proclamation was also issued by Montgomery County, Maryland. This proclamation was presented by Mr. Chuck Short, Special Assistant to the Montgomery County Executive.

Pain Connection Executive Director, Gwenn Herman, welcomed the participants with an overview of the history and work of the organization.

The morning keynote speaker at the symposium was Dr. Howard Heit, As-

sistant Clinical Professor at Georgetown University. Dr. Heit gave a fascinating presentation on "The Truth About Pain Management: Treating the Chronic Pain Patient with a History of Addiction." He described how his life was turned upside down over twenty years ago as a result of an automobile accident. He was confined to a wheelchair and lived with constant pain. Dr. Heit was gradually able to overcome the feelings of anger and despair by devoting himself to the study of pain and addiction to such an extent that he is now one of the leading experts in this field. In 2007, after twenty years of suffering, Dr. Heit underwent a procedure called deep brain stimulation. This was a four hour surgical procedure. It was so successful that he was able to recover his mobility with a significant reduction in the level of pain.

In his presentation, Dr. Heit described the widespread confusion between physical dependence and addiction, a confusion which contributes to the under treating of chronic pain. He explained that physical dependence and addiction can occur together, but physical dependence is not addiction. Physical

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Secretary of State John McDonough presents proclamation to Pain Connection. (L)Rohit Saran, Neil Goldstein, Mary French, Sharon Barrett, Gwenn Herman, Malcolm Herman and guest speaker Dr. Howard Heit.

dependence is an expected, neuro-pharmacological adaptation that occurs as a result of chronic exposure to a particular drug. Addiction is a much more complex bio-behavioral phenomenon. One of Dr. Heit's missions is to teach health-care professionals about these distinctions. He believes that a pain specialist must have a rudimentary knowledge of

addiction medicine and the addiction specialist must understand the basics of pain management. His goal is to promote improved understanding of the definitions on the basic scientific and clinical levels in order to enable health-care professionals to better evaluate and treat patients with chronic pain, with or without the disease of addiction.

studies to support the scientific basis for such widespread use of complementary medicine. Readers are encouraged to check out the excellent website at www.nccam.nih.gov.

We express our appreciation to the following organizations for providing educational materials for the symposium:

- Pain Pathways provided copies of their magazine.
- NIH NCCAM provided "Ask Tell" brochures, *Herbs at a Glance: A Quick Guide to Herbal Supplements* book, and copies of articles on acupuncture and spinal manipulations.
- American Pain Foundation for providing information on "Conquering Pain Together", their newsletter "Pain Community News" and the following booklets: "Treatment Options: A Guide for People Living with Pain", "Pain Resource Guide-Getting the Help You Need", "Access Matters: Making Sense of Health Coverage" and pamphlets on Pain Aid and the Pain Care Bill of Rights.

We'd also like to thank the following local business who helped make the symposium a success: Dunkin Donuts, LaMadeline's, Starbucks, Lebanese Taverna, Mykonis Grill and Harris Teeter.

Upcoming Meetings

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

12320 Parklawn Drive, 2nd floor,
Large conference room, Rockville
1st Thursdays 1:30–3:00 p.m.

Gentle Movement Classes

Washington Grove Methodist
Church, 303 Chestnut Ave,
Washington Grove
2nd Wednesdays, 2:00–3:30 p.m.

Bethesda Biofeedback Classes

7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1309
Bethesda
Reservation is required.
3rd Mondays, 1:00–2:30 p.m.

PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY

Rexford Place

9885 Greenbelt Road, Lanham
2nd Wednesdays, 1:30–3:00 p.m.

HOWARD COUNTY

The Wellness Center

Medical Pavillion, 10710 Charter
Drive, Suite 100, Columbia
3rd Mondays, 1:00–2:30 p.m.

TOWSON/BALTIMORE

Bykota Senior Center, 611 Central
Avenue, Towson
3rd Tuesdays, 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

VIRGINIA

Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine

6829 Elm Street, Suite 300
2nd Wednesdays, 1:30–3:00 p.m.

SPEAKERS SERIES

Holiday Park Senior Center

3950 Ferrara Drive
Wheaton, Md. 20906
240-777-4999 (directions only)
Selected Mondays, 1:30–3:00 p.m.

The afternoon session was highlighted by a presentation given by Dr. Jack Killen, the Deputy Director from the National Institutes of Health National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM). Dr. Killen described the work of NCCAM and stated that it has a total budget of just 130 million dollars out of a total NIH budget of over 30 billion. He gave a presentation entitled "Future Directions in Research on Complementary and Alternative Medicine." He talked about the different types of complementary medicine and in particular discussed an NCCAM survey carried out in 2007. It was surprising to learn that over 40% of adults in the United States use some kind of complementary medicine and that the principal reason for this use was some form of chronic pain condition - back pain, joint pain, neck pain, arthritis and headaches being the leading causes. As a part of NIH, NCCAM is interested in developing science based and data driven



Dr. Jack Killen, Deputy Director NCCAM NIH

And last, but certainly not least, we thank the Jewish Council of Aging for providing the lecture space and Bonnie Clausen for setting up the space for us.

Malcolm Herman is a Pain Connection Board Director, serves on the board of the American Pain Foundation as a Pain Community Advisory Council (PCAC) representative and has a legal practice in Rockville, Maryland.

A Day of Rest and Reconnection through Mindfulness Practice

This past May, Pain Connection hosted, “A Day of Rest and Reconnection through Mindfulness Practice” which was funded by the Healthcare Initiative Foundation. Mary French, RN, MSW, LCSW-C, trained a group of 27 professionals and nonprofessionals in using mindfulness based practices to reduce chronic pain. Ms. French is a graduate of the Internship Program Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts (<http://umassmed.edu>).

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is based on Buddhist practices of Vipassana or “Insight” Meditation which were first introduced into mainstream hospital based programs in the 1970’s by Jon Kabat Zinn, author of “Full Catastrophe Living; Using the Ancient Wisdom of Your Body and Mind”. The practice of mindfulness is achieved by maintaining moment-by-moment nonjudgmental awareness through a variety of possible meditative techniques. Studies have consistently shown that using these techniques can dramatically reduce physical and psychological pain.

According to Kabat Zinn, Mindfulness is “the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment”. Mindfulness is paying attention on purpose and not, as some people

Holiday Giving

As the holiday season of giving approaches you will be making important decisions on what to give loved ones that have chronic pain and how to make a change in your community. We are asking you to make a donation to help our efforts to expand the services of Pain Connection in order to improve the quality of life of people with chronic pain and their families.

We have been serving the community for 11 years advocating for proper pain management to people with chronic pain. The move into the Nonprofit Village in Rockville has helped to establish Pain Connection as an essential resource in our community. Your contribution will go toward our free groups, classes and training program.

Times are hard, county, state and federal budgets have been cut and we need you even more now to support our cause. Any donation amount is helpful. You can donate your gift in honor of a loved one. Individuals donating over \$100 will be listed in our next newsletter and on our website.

Pain Connection wishes you a healthy and joyous holiday season!

Sincerely,
Gwenn Herman
Executive Director

United Way Campaign

Our United Way National Capitol Area Campaign designation is #8695. Our United Way Combined Federal Campaign designation is #62705. Please designate us on your donor card at work or when making a donation! Also, tell your co-workers, family, friends and neighbors.

mistakenly think, clearing the mind or becoming non-feeling. Its use to reduce chronic pain represents a paradigm shift from the traditional view that emphasized reducing or avoiding or moving away from pain and seeking an external cure to an alternative view that emphasizes acceptance and awareness of pain and moving toward it as well as internal healing. Mindfulness based practices are becoming increasingly popular. According to recent surveys, 41.1% of psychotherapist use mindfulness based practices at least some of the time.

Ms. French explained that although Buddhist meditation stresses both insight and stopping to rest, we tend to focus on insight and forget about stopping or resting which is equally important. It is hard to allow ourselves

the space and time to rest in our culture which is so highly results oriented. This cultural bias may make it hard for us to mediate. In addition, there are other sources of resistance that we may encounter that will make it hard for us to succeed. We all have personal habits, inertia and things that we tend to avoid that can become barriers to practice. She explained that this resistance can be met with gentle attention, with compassion for ourselves and our experience. She stressed that a compassionate attitude toward ourselves as we meditate is key to using meditation to cope with pain. Ms. French read Jon Kabat Zinn’s “Meditation on Loving Kindness” (<http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/stress>) used to create a sense of compassion toward oneself and toward others.

Membership

We Need You! Chronic pain is still a new and developing field in medicine and mental health.

We Need You! There still is not enough awareness by the public to try and solve this debilitating problem.

We Need You! Chronic pain is not pressing on the minds of government, foundations and private donors.

We Need You! In order to support and further develop out programs.

Take a Stand! Help solve this pressing problem, become a member and grow with us!

Join Pain Connection Today!!!

- Your payment of a \$40.00 annual membership fee may be made in the following ways:
- Credit card on-line through our secure server.
- Check mailed to Pain Connection with completed application form.
- Fax your completed application and credit card information to 301-231-6668.
- Through Network For Good which is a secure service. Please also send in an application form for our records.

Your membership benefits include:

- DISCOUNTS of up to 25% with local wellness providers
- Monthly notices of support group meetings and the Professional Speaker Series by mail, email and/or phone call
- Chronic Pain resources
- Pain Connection's newsletter
- Contact information for your local support leader (on request)
- Health care practitioner referral list for your geographic area (on request)

She described the Schwartz Model of disease in which the ultimate origin of disease is inattention. By paying attention to our bodies in a compassionate way through meditation we can heal the disconnection between the mind and the body that, in this view, causes disease. In the case of chronic pain this process of paying attention to the body should be done gently and for short periods of time. Ms. French gave a method to re-connect to the body using the acronym BASIC: Breathing; Attitude (compassion); Sensation (direct experience of body sensation); Inner sight and Choices (reacting rather than responding). If one is able to change attitudes towards sensations and toward pain it can influence our perception of pain. Knowledge gained through meditation about what stories we tell ourselves about our pain, what emotional attitudes we have about it and how we perceive it, allows us to reduce some of our habitual maladaptive responses to pain.

Ms. French discussed how chronic stress can overwhelm our brains by activating the sympathetic nervous system and depressing the parasympathetic nervous system. The possible long term effects of sympathetic overload include: immune suppression, heart disease and depression.

How our brain interprets our life experience can also add to our level of stress. We all have cognitive filters which assist us in interpreting events. She described how different types of personalities can be seen as different types of cognitive filters. People with anxiety tend to see things in terms of not having enough resources to meet a challenge and are worried about the future. People with depression may perceive themselves as not measuring up to an imagined ideal and think they are not good enough.

One of the most important effects of meditation is that it can reduce the effects of these negative filters. Meditation

allows a person to have greater knowledge of the nature of their own cognitive filter because when we meditate, we allow ourselves to become aware of the types of thoughts that enter our minds. Meditation allows us not only to know what our thoughts are, but also enables us to see them as mental events rather than reacting to them in habitual ways. For example, if we learn through meditation that we have many thoughts about future problems, we may be able to see this as a perception rather than necessarily a good prediction about the future. Since the brain is able to change, meditation has been found to deter thinning of the brain that happens with age. Meditation increases alpha waves which are associated with relaxation. Brain centers which are associated with attention and motivation can be increased and those associated with depression, pain and guilt decrease. Ms. French had the group blow up balloons and draw a mental map of their minds so that participants were able to think about the nature of their own mental filters.

Ms. French talked about the peace that can be achieved by cultivating the mental state of acceptance. Acceptance is not resignation but allowing "what is" in the present moment. She asked the group to think about three things that they had trouble accepting in life. Then she had them think about these things and make a fist to remind themselves of how they contract around things that they cannot accept. She asked them to consider; "What energy is used to maintaining the fist? What happens if you no longer contract around an issue?"

In the final part of her presentation, Ms. French had participants think about their commitment to practice meditation. She asked them to imagine that someone they loved had been hurt and needed their help. In order to help they would have to sit with that person for 45 minutes a day and to be watchful and listen, to be patient and accept anything

they would say without trying to fix anything. Finally, she asked them to imagine that they were this person; would they be willing to benefit themselves by setting aside the time to mediate each day?

Gael Cheek is a program consultant for Pain Connection.

Sharon Barrett Becomes New Board Member

Sharon E. Barrett, MS, joined Pain Connection as its newest board member in July 2010. She has over thirty years of leadership in public, nonprofit and private sectors in the areas of administration, program development and public health practice.

Sharon retired from the Federal Public Health Service in 2003. In her last position, she was the Director of Minority and Women's Health in the Bureau of Primary Health Care in the Health Resources and Services Administration. She currently consults on issues concerning minority and women's health, primary care, health literacy, language access and cultural competency.

Sharon is a staff consultant to the Association of Clinicians to the Underserved (ACU) providing consultation and expertise to improve the skills of primary care clinicians promoting and working with underserved populations. She has served as the Principal Investigator on two studies for ACU. The programs include examining health literacy practices of safety net providers and examining language access issues in primary care settings. She is currently the content expert on ACU's learning collaborative on Language, Culture and Health Literacy in primary care settings.

Sharon is the Mid-Atlantic Regional Leader and Board member of the Inter-cultural Cancer Council (ICC) as well

as an advisory board member of The Tigerlily Foundation. She is an active member of the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) Roundtable on Health Literacy and is an appointed member of the DHHS Minority Women's Health Panel of Experts.

Sharon received her Master's of Science at Columbia University's School of Social Work and is currently completing her Doctorate of Public Health at Morgan State University's community public health program.

Thank You Geoffrey Manifold!

After seven years on the board of directors, Geoffrey Manifold will be leaving Pain Connection. Geoff first came to Pain Connection to see if the chronic pain support group could assist him after being injured in a job related accident. Not only did he return to the group often, but he helped others in the group as well. Geoff was asked to join the board of directors in 2003. He became board secretary and served in this position until 2005. He then was elected Treasurer

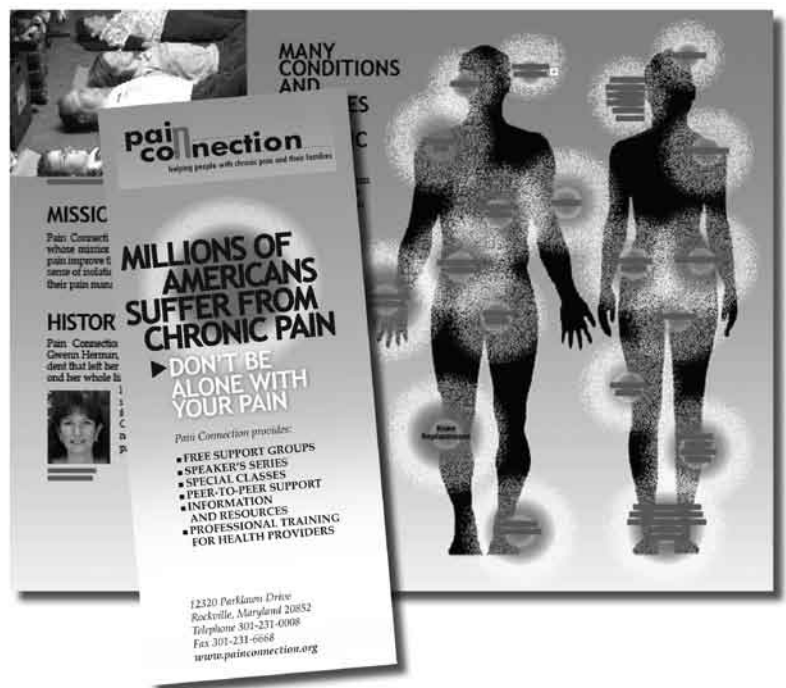
2005–2006, President from 2006–2008 and Vice-President from 2009–2010.

While on the board Geoff devoted many hours toward our fundraisers, conferences and trainings. Geoff's family also volunteered at many events. His wife, Mary Lou, and son, Michael, as well as other family members gave many hours of assistance to the organization.

We will miss Geoff and thank him and his family for their devotion to Pain Connection and serving so many people with chronic pain and their families.

Pain Connection Brochure

Carol Porter, formerly a staff art director/graphic designer at *The Washington Post* is now a free lance designer and artist/painter. Ms. Porter has donated her time and talent to designing Pain Connection's new brochure. Carol has done this work through the Pro Bono Program of the Montgomery County Volunteer Center. Ms. Porter began her early art and design training at The Corcoran Gallery's Saturday classes and at Mckinley High School. She studied at



New Reduced Price: An Excellent Gift for \$25.00

Pain Connection's *Making the Invisible Visible: A Chronic Pain Manual for Health Care Providers* is a comprehensive and unique publication that contains up-to-date information on chronic pain, exercises and handouts for developing coping skills and strategies, and insights and experiences of chronic pain sufferers and their families.

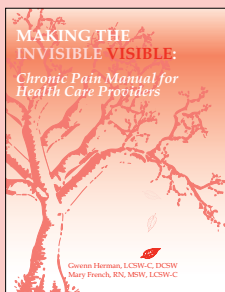
Written by Gwenn Herman and Mary French, who each have more than 25 years of experience as health providers and also live with chronic pain, the 262-page manual examines a wide range of topics including:

- Myths and misconceptions about chronic pain clients
- Psychosocial effects of chronic pain
- Pain Connection's Support Group Model
- Complementary and alternative treatments

"Ms. Herman's and Ms. French's firsthand exposure to the difficulties of getting healthcare providers to properly recognize, diagnose and treat chronic pain makes this an excellent resource for both professionals and patients."

Dr. Gary Kaplan, Founder and Medical Director of The Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine

The book is \$25.00, plus \$5.00 shipping and handling fees plus tax. To order, go to www.painconnection.org or call 301-231-0008.



Howard University and completed her BFA degree in Advertising Graphics at Moore College of Art in Philadelphia. Upon immediate completion of formal studies, Ms. Porter gained experience in commercial television as a staff designer and then as art director at two major stations. She won an EMMY award for a locally-produced show from the Washington Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

For several years, she worked for *The Washington Post* as an art designer directing several feature sections: Sunday Show, the Sunday Business Section, Outlook and the Health and Food sections. Her freelance credits include collateral and promotional materials for The Peace Corps' Cultural Exchange program, The Washington Guild of the Dance Theatre of Harlem, The Washington Urban League's 1980 Art Expo, The National Artist Bureau, and The National Association of Black Journalists. She has won numerous awards of merit for her print, television and advertising design (New York Art Director's Club, Print Magazine, Society of Newspaper Design and Washington Art Directors Club). We are very grateful for meeting Carol and appreciate the time that she put into designing our brochure.

Earn Money for Pain Connection While You Shop Online!

Also, Pain Connection can earn a donation every time you search the Internet and shop online!!! It's so easy!

GoodSearch.com and GoodShop.com

Search the web with Yahoo-powered GoodSearch.com and they'll donate about a penny to Pain Connection each time you search!



Shop at more than 1,300 GoodShop.com merchants including Amazon, Best Buy, Toys R Us, and a percentage of each purchase will go to Pain Connection!

buyrockville.com

The Rockville Chamber of Commerce has selected 15 non-profits and Pain Connection is one of them to participate in the Rockville Rewards program.



The cards sell for \$25 and all the money goes to us to support our programs. There are discounts for restaurants and businesses. You can go online to rockvillerewards.com to check the deals. Buy your card(s) on our website or send a check to Pain Connection.

News Updates

Designated Founders for contributions of \$100 and over

Dr. Michael April, United Way, Malcolm Herman, Mary French, Ellen Weiss and Jon Greenberg

Thank you volunteers!

Many thanks to volunteers Ellen Moran, Sherry Hutchinson, Colleen Kerich, Cordelia Goldstein and Clark French who help keep Pain Connection programs growing.

Members' Forum

Pain Connection welcomes articles, poems, and drawings from members' and families to provide an insight into their lives.

Physical and mental therapy: Renovating a bathroom

I decided I couldn't look at the pink walls in the bathroom any longer. I knew that if a change was to take place, I was going to have to do it myself. Who me? Put in flooring, paint ceiling, walls, remove toilet and reinstall, remove sink and vanity and put in a new one!

I've been a faithful member of my local Pain Support Group for some time. I've been dealing with severe allergy and inflammation issues that have been lifestyle-changing. I don't do bending, knees in particular. Lack of stamina and strength and just plain lack of know-how were big issues if I were to proceed with the renovation.

And besides, there was that damaged drywall and ceiling in the corner. I told myself that if I could repair that, and if it looked reasonably good, I would take that as a sign to continue. So, out came the step stool and the spackle. I cut out the damaged section and proceeded to spackle. Ten minutes!

OK, let's try painting. I was used to my muscles and skin complaining all day long. What were they going to say about this? Working with the ladder required a great deal of bending and contortions, really. It required stretching out arms that hurt. However, arms and legs really benefited from the exercise. They even hurt less! Lymph glands got a workout. Blood was circulating. All the movement was turning out to be therapeutic.

Continued with the easiest flooring I could find at Home Depot. A vinyl plank floating floor fit the bill. At least according to Paul in the Flooring Department. I was not feeling confident, and I didn't mention bending and stamina would be a problem. He drew detailed pictures and copied pages out of the HOW TO MANUAL. He assured me I could do it.

I began to install the pearl maple wood look-a-like flooring on the diagonal for a deck-like appearance, according to Paul's diagrams. I found I could lay the planks down if by bending at the waist rather than the knees. I got out the old workbench from the shed so that I didn't have to bend while cutting. My arms got another workout cutting the planks to size. I really got into it and sometimes worked late into the night. It took time; I worked slowly, as strength permitted. I was pleased with the results and that kept me going.

The next step was the baseboard, which required miter cuts for the corners. I found an old table saw in the shed. Do I dare? I set up shop outside. The power saw was very heavy. I put on protective eye goggles and the strength came to operate it. (I eventually had to get someone to help with the miter cuts because the walls aren't straight.)

With the baseboard in, I reinstalled the toilet that I had rebuilt with new parts. With Strength from Above, I was able to use a hack saw to cut off the long closet bolts to the proper length. This involved lying down on the floor--remember, bending is difficult. Two nights' worth of work. I was amazed that I could push my body this far.

The sink and vanity came next. This didn't come easy. I fought the battle of mental and physical fatigue. I wanted this to be done. It was nine months since I had started. I was not skilled with a power drill and I didn't particularly feel like learning. Home Depot encouraged me once again. I drilled holes in the wall to install cabinet, backsplash and sidesplash.

Finally, the sink. I had purchased a new trap and water supply lines. It was just a matter of connecting everything together. It was a challenge to get at the plumbing under the sink. I found that using a small stool enabled me to save my knees and reach all the plumbing. I had found a way. Faucet on top looked great. Connections looked good. Turn on water supply. Problem—three leaks. Another trip to the Depot. They had the solution, as always. Pipe joint compound took care of the leaks.

Finally, a functional bathroom that looks very spa-like. It took ten months, but there are no more pink walls. It was extremely challenging mentally, physically. But there were definite benefits:

- Tremendous saving;
- Improved flexibility, circulation, less stiffness;
- Improved mental state—it was good having a goal to work toward;
- Increased confidence in my abilities—can't wait to use the power drill again; and
- Greater trust in Strength and Power beyond myself—help was sent whenever I needed it.

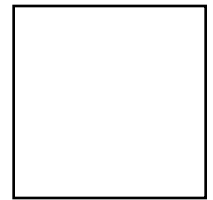
Irene is a long time group member of the Howard County Chronic Pain Support Group. Copyright by Irene Roskey 2010



The new and beautiful plumbing installed by Irene.



PAIN CONNECTION®
CHRONIC PAIN OUTREACH CENTER, INC.
12320 Parklawn Drive
Suite 210
Rockville, MD 20852



OR CURRENT RESIDENT:

There are 76 million Americans suffering from chronic pain who are not receiving the treatment they need. Many fall between the cracks in their own private health insurance, workman’s compensation, and disability benefits. Others are helpless because of a lack of insurance.

Pain Connection’s mission is to help people with chronic pain improve their quality of life, decrease their sense of isolation and take a more active role in their treatment. We do this by providing information, psycho-social support, skills-building and training to people with chronic pain, their families and health care providers.

Pain Connection is a 501(c)(3) human health service agency and was incorporated in 1999.

PAIN CONNECTION®
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Mary French, President
Neil Goldstein, Treasurer
Ellen Weiss, Secretary
Malcolm Herman, Director
Mandy David, Director
Rohit Saran, Director
Sharon Barrett, Director

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