U.S. PAIN
FOUNDATION

UNMASKING PAIN TOGETHER

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

To our valued friends and supporters:

Every day, I am reminded that behind every statistic about chronic pain is a person doing their best to navigate an experience that too often remains misunderstood.

At the U.S. Pain Foundation, our work begins by listening. In 2025, we released findings from our National Pain Experience Survey, capturing the voices of more than 2,500 individuals across the country. Their insights are helping shape advocacy, research, education, and policy conversations that will influence the future of pain care.

This year also brought meaningful progress across our programs. Families gathered at our Pediatric Pain Warrior Summer Camp, individuals found connection through more than 800 peer support meetings held throughout the year, and new educational resources helped people better understand and navigate life with chronic pain. At the same time, we continued bringing the patient voice into medical education, national research discussions, and policy conversations at the local, state, and federal levels.

None of this work happens alone. It is made possible by a community of volunteers, advocates, supporters, and organizations, all working toward a common cause. This year, that support included new community-driven efforts—such as Groth Pain & Spine's Annual Charity Golf Tournament, which will continue each year in support of our mission—helping sustain programs and expand access to care and connection.

> Together, we can continue building a future where people living with pain are seen, heard, understood, and supported.

Thank you for being part of this mission and helping move pain care forward.

With gratitude,

Nicole Hemmenway

Nicole Hemmenway
CEO, U.S. Pain Foundation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BY THE NUMBERS

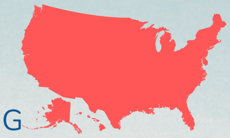
Key accomplishments in 2025.

228,887
SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

35,487
INDIVIDUALS ON MAILING LIST

6,914
ACTION ALERT ADVOCATES

VOLUNTEERS IN **50** STATES



WITH **173** NEW VOLUNTEERS JOINING FROM **40** STATES AND WASHINGTON, D.C.

ENGAGED IN **19** COALITIONS OR ALLIANCES

SERVED ON **7** ADVISORY COMMITTEES

15
RESEARCHERS FEATURED IN KNOWVEMBER VIDEO SERIES

FACILITATED **845** ONLINE PEER SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

13,165
PEER SUPPORT ATTENDANCES

55 FAMILIES
ATTENDED 4TH-ANNUAL PEDIATRIC PAIN WARRIOR FAMILY SUMMER CAMP

20 ADVOCATES TRAINED THROUGH VIRTUAL ADVOCACY TRAINING SERIES

$10K+ RAISED THROUGH NEW ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

PRESENTED AT **15** MEDICAL CONFERENCES, RESEARCH FORUMS, AND PROFESSIONAL EVENTS

2,500+
PARTICIPANTS IN NATIONAL SURVEY

FEATURED THE REAL STORIES OF **9** INDIVIDUALS LIVING WITH PAIN IN THE ***INVISIBLE PROJECT: PAIN RESEARCH EDITION***

60,670
EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

NATIONAL PAIN EXPERIENCE SURVEY

New data reveals how pain affects lives, care, and access to treatment.

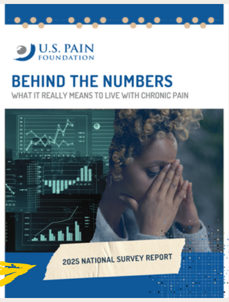
In 2025, the U.S. Pain Foundation released findings from its **National Pain Experience Survey**, a landmark initiative designed to better understand the realities of living with, caring for, and treating pain in the United States.

With **more than 2,500 respondents nationwide**, the survey captured perspectives from individuals living with pain, caregivers, parents of children with pain, youth, and health care professionals. Findings were released through **seven stakeholder-specific reports**, offering one of the most comprehensive snapshots of the pain experience in the country today.

The reports highlight critical gaps in care—from persistent insurance and policy barriers that limit access to treatment to the profound emotional, social, and financial burdens that pain places on individuals and families. These insights are helping inform advocacy, guide education, and elevate the voices of people living with pain in conversations about research, policy, and care.

All seven reports remain available as **free resources for advocates, educators, clinicians, researchers, and policymakers** working to improve pain care.

- **2,500+ respondents nationwide**
- Perspectives from **patients, caregivers, parents, youth, and providers**
- Findings informing **advocacy, research, support, and education initiatives**
- Free reports available to equip and empower **the public, policymakers, and health care leaders**



U.S. PAIN FOUNDATION

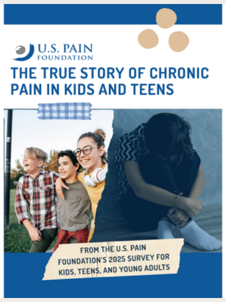
BEHIND THE NUMBERS

WHAT IT REALLY MEANS TO LIVE WITH CHRONIC PAIN

2025 NATIONAL SURVEY REPORT

Seven National Survey Reports Released

- Behind the Numbers: What It Really Means to Live With Chronic Pain
- The Hidden Struggles and Needs of Chronic Pain Caregivers
- Treating Chronic Pain: Health Care Provider Voices and Perspectives
- What It Truly Means to Parent a Child or Teen With Chronic Pain
- The Hidden Reality of Chronic Pain in Youth
- The True Story of Chronic Pain in Kids and Teens (geared toward young audiences)
- The Realities of Acute Pain



U.S. PAIN FOUNDATION

THE TRUE STORY OF CHRONIC PAIN IN KIDS AND TEENS

FROM THE U.S. PAIN FOUNDATION'S 2025 SURVEY FOR KIDS, TEENS, AND YOUNG ADULTS

ADVOCACY

Ensuring the voices of people with pain are heard in the spaces where decisions are made.

The U.S. Pain Foundation **elevates the lived experiences of individuals with pain** in state and federal policymaking. Through grassroots advocacy, education, and collaboration with policymakers, clinicians, and researchers, we empower patients and caregivers to share their stories and influence policies that shape pain care across the country.

Our advocacy efforts focus on expanding access to multidisciplinary treatments, improving insurance coverage for evidence-based therapies, strengthening provider education, sustaining telehealth access, advancing pain research, and **ensuring the voices of people living with pain inform health policy decisions**.

Advancing Pain Policy, Research, and Therapeutics

Institute for Clinical and Economic Review (ICER)

U.S. Pain represented the patient community during ICER's evaluation of a new pain treatment, helping ensure that real-world patient experiences **informed national discussions** about treatment value, coverage, and access.

Pain Therapeutics Roundtable

U.S. Pain organized and led a Pain Therapeutics Roundtable, bringing together experts from the Food and Drug Administration, National Institutes of Health, academia, industry, and patient advocacy organizations. The half-day meeting focused on **identifying barriers** to the development of novel treatments for chronic pain and **exploring solutions** to accelerate therapeutic innovation. A white paper summarizing the meeting's findings was distributed following the event.

State Advocacy Wins for 2025

State Pain Policy Passes in Illinois

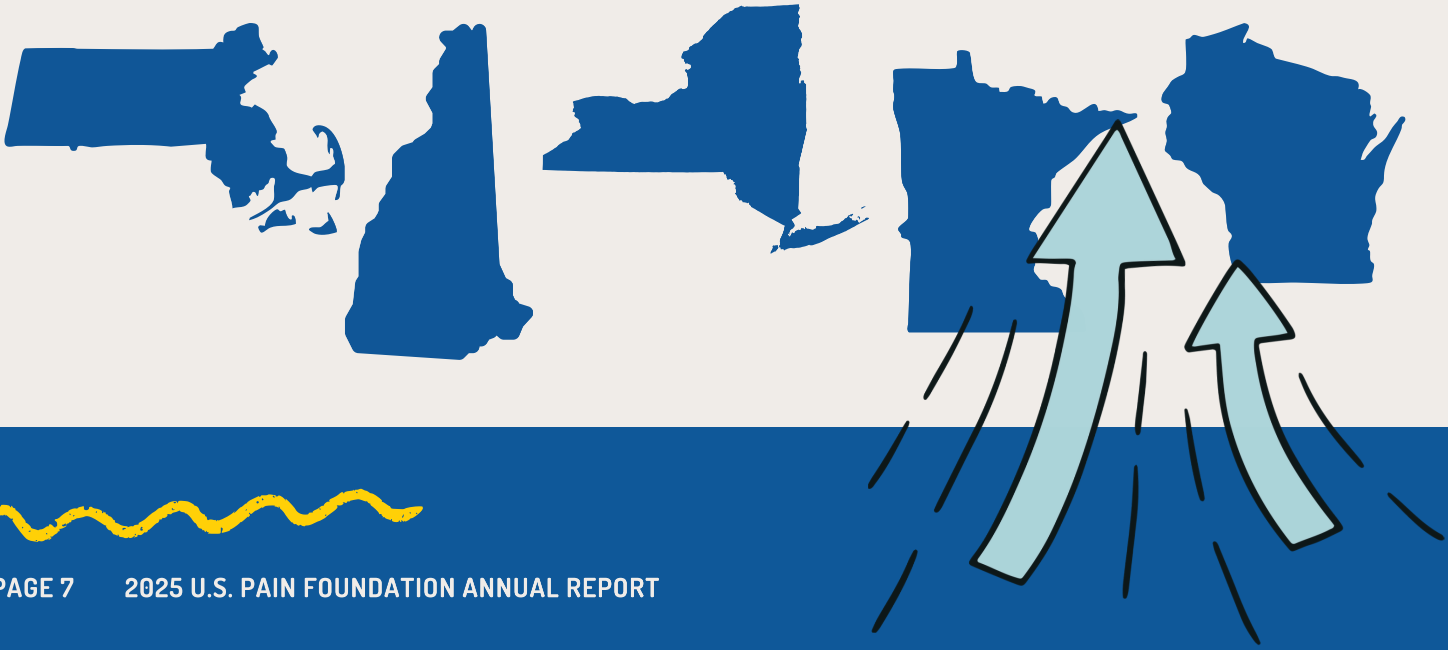
Advocacy efforts **helped secure passage of legislation** in Illinois expanding access to comprehensive pain care. The law requires insurers to maintain and publicly post pain management plans covering a broad range of treatments, including non-opioid medications and non-pharmacological therapies, and ensures the Illinois Medicaid Preferred Drug List does not disadvantage non-opioid pain treatments.

Driving Further Policy Progress in Other States

U.S. Pain also worked with lawmakers to introduce legislation aimed at **improving insurance coverage and access to multidisciplinary pain care** in:

- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- New York
- Minnesota
- Wisconsin

The Massachusetts legislation includes provisions expanding Medicaid coverage for integrated pain care services, strengthening patient education resources, supporting care navigation, enhancing provider training, and improving chronic pain data reporting.



Federal Policy Milestones

Advancing Research for Chronic Pain Act

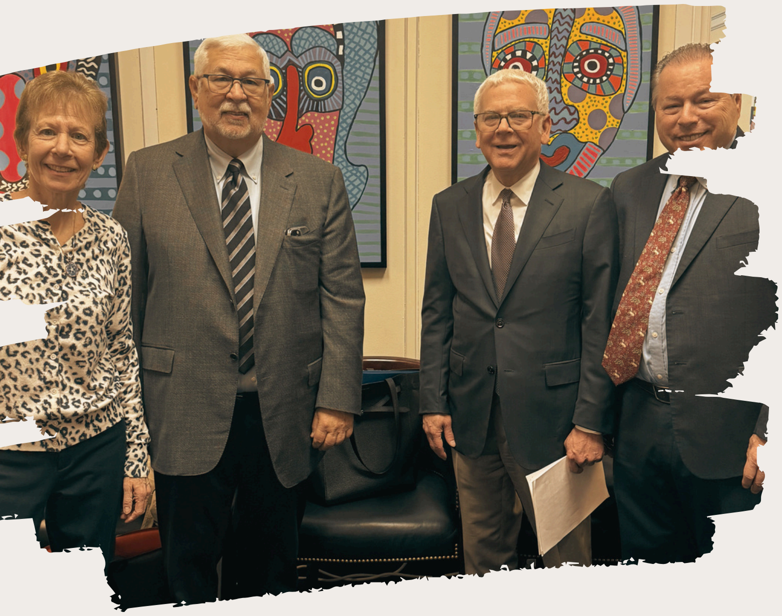
Working with Senator Tim Kaine's office, U.S. Pain helped prepare the Advancing Research for Chronic Pain Act for reintroduction in the 119th Congress. The legislation calls for **improved national data collection** on chronic pain prevalence, health care utilization, and economic impact. Senators Kevin Cramer and Andy Kim have agreed to serve as co-introducers, and approximately 70 nonprofit organizations have committed to supporting the legislation.

Senate and House Appropriations Language

We joined with a small coalition of groups to secure language included in the U.S. Senate and House Appropriations Committee's FY2026 Labor–HHS report, earmarking $285 million for the NIH-NINDS pain research portion of the Helping to End Addiction Long-term (HEAL) Initiative. This funding supports **hundreds of pain research studies** throughout the country.

Policy Engagement

U.S. Pain signed onto **15 coalition letters** addressing issues critical to individuals living with pain, including protecting funding for National Institutes of Health (NIH) medical research, extending Medicare telehealth access, and reforming pharmacy benefit manager practices that impact patient access to medications.



Medical Cannabis and Hemp Policy

U.S. Pain engaged in national policy discussions on medical cannabis and hemp regulation to ensure **patient safety, access, and emerging research** remain central considerations.

In 2025, the organization:

- Testified before lawmakers in **Rhode Island** regarding medical cannabis legislation
- Elevated the voices of children, parents, and individuals living with pain who offered in-person and written testimony for a key **Texas** bill impacting access to hemp-derived therapies
- Participated in national dialogue on cannabis-based therapies for pain, including an **NPR interview on emerging research** in chronic pain treatment
- Published an **op-ed in *The Hill*** advocating for policies that protect patient access to hemp-derived therapies
- Advocates sent **1,744 messages to policymakers** supporting protection of patient access to hemp-derived products

U.S. PAIN FOUNDATION

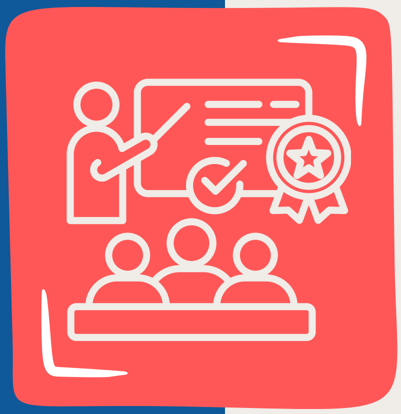
LEARN MORE

Understanding Ryan's Law - Rights of terminally ill patients to use cannabis

March 11
1:30–2:30 p.m. ET

Pain Advocates in Action

- **20 new advocates trained** through the U.S. Pain advocacy training program
- Provided testimony in **nine legislative hearings** across multiple states
- Engaged **over 6,900 individuals** through action alerts on critical legislation
- Worked with volunteer advocates in **6 states** to advance multidisciplinary pain care policy



Advocacy Highlights

- Hosted a **Pain Awareness Day event** at the Massachusetts State House with legislators, clinicians, and patients to discuss improving pain care policy
- Led a **federal coalition** focused on advancing pain care initiatives on Capitol Hill and across federal health agencies; engaged with HHS, NIH, CMS, and FDA on various issues throughout the year
- Organized **three Voter Voice action alerts**, generating more than **300 messages to policymakers** on federal and state legislation

INvisible Project

Sharing stories. Expanding knowledge. Inspiring progress.

The ***INvisible Project*** magazine highlights the lived experiences of individuals with chronic pain, using powerful storytelling and personal photographs to bring visibility to conditions and experiences that are often misunderstood. Published in print and digital formats, each edition explores different dimensions of life with pain through personal narratives alongside insights from clinicians, researchers, and advocates.

The 2025 edition focused on **pain research** and the many ways people living with pain can contribute to advancing new treatments and scientific discovery. Through stories from individuals and families who have participated in research, as well as perspectives from scientists and advocates, the issue explored how clinical trials, patient registries, surveys, real-world evidence, patient-reported outcomes, and other research studies help deepen understanding of pain and improve care.

To expand access to these stories and insights, current and past ***INvisible Project*** articles and profiles were integrated into the U.S. Pain Foundation website, making the content **easier to discover and share**. Reader surveys are also helping guide future topics by gathering feedback on the information most valuable to the pain community.

- Released the ***INvisible Project: Pain Research*** edition in October 2025 and distributed more than **4,700 copies** before year-end
- Reached **over 2,000 subscribers**, including individuals with pain and health care providers
- Integrated ***INvisible Project*** content into the **U.S. Pain Foundation website** to expand access
- Launched **reader surveys** to gather feedback on educational content and topics of interest

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUPPORT

Peer-led support that fosters connection, learning, and resilience.

Peer support remains a cornerstone of the U.S. Pain Foundation's work to reduce isolation and to support the emotional well-being of people living with chronic pain. Through **Pain Connection**, individuals individuals can find encouragement in a supportive community, share practical strategies for managing pain, and connect with others who understand their experiences.

In 2025, the peer support network continued to grow, with **seven new groups launched and one previously paused group restarted**, expanding access to support for individuals across the country. Offerings include state and national peer support meetings; affinity spaces for populations such as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, LGBTQ+ individuals, men, veterans, and more; as well as specialized gatherings centered on creative expression and wellness practices like reading, writing, and mindfulness.

Throughout the year, **hundreds of virtual meetings** created welcoming spaces for individuals living with pain to connect, exchange coping strategies, and build meaningful relationships. Support from Massachusetts Health Decisions helped expand peer support and peer-led education in the Commonwealth, equipping participants with tools to better navigate care and manage daily life.

- **845 peer support meetings** held nationwide (**16% increase** from 2024)
- **15 individuals** attended U.S. Pain's peer support group leader training
- **13,165 total attendances** across peer support groups (**22% increase** from 2024)
- **7 new peer support groups** launched and one previously paused group restarted

PEDIATRIC PAIN

Building community, education, and advocacy for families navigating youth pain.

The **Pediatric Pain Warrior program** provides education, community, and advocacy, connecting children and families living with chronic pain.

In 2025, the program welcomed **55 families** to our fourth-annual Pediatric Pain Warrior Family Summer Camp, a five-day experience at Morgan's Camp focused on new experiences, education, peer support, and community for families navigating pediatric pain.

In collaboration with Stanford University, we launched an IRB-approved research study to better understand the impact of camp on these families. They completed surveys before and after camp to assess changes in pain, mental health, and overall well-being.

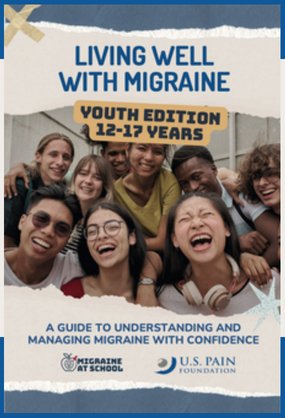
Throughout the year, families connected through **Family Pain Education Days** hosted at children's hospitals, which offered expanded in-person learning and support. We released ***Taking Charge of Your Health Care***, an educational guide designed to help young adults navigate the transition from pediatric to adult health care.

The program launched a new **youth educational track** at **Headache on the Hill**, developed in collaboration with The Headache Alliance and Migraine at School—creating opportunities for young people living with headache disorders and chronic pain to engage in national advocacy conversations.

Beyond these initiatives, pediatric resources developed through the Pediatric Pain Warrior program reached **4,893 schools** and approximately **2.5 million students nationwide** through collaboration with Migraine at School. In addition, **3,000 *Living Well with Migraine* guides** were distributed, and a new educational resource for children—***Living Well with Migraine: Youth Edition***—was developed for release in 2026.

Pediatric Program Highlights

- **55 families** attended our fourth-annual five-day camp at Morgan's Camp
- Piloted **youth education track at Headache on the Hill** with The Headache Alliance and Migraine at School
- Hosted **3 Family Pain Education Days** at children's hospitals
- Providers from **Texas Children's Hospital** and **Cook Children's Medical Center** served as camp volunteers and presenters
- Received support from **4 nonprofits**—Danielle Foundation, Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, BNSF Railway Foundation, and Independent Pilots Association Foundation—for families attending camp
- Developed the educational guide, ***Living Well With Migraine: Youth Edition***, with Migraine at School



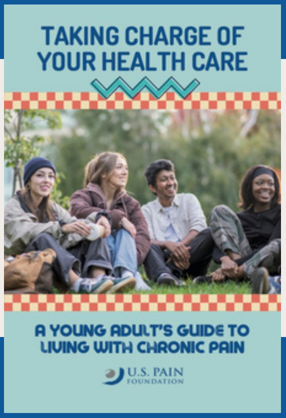
LIVING WELL WITH MIGRAINE

YOUTH EDITION 12-17 YEARS

A GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING MIGRAINE WITH CONFIDENCE

MIGRAINE AT SCHOOL

U.S. PAIN FOUNDATION



TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH CARE

A YOUNG ADULT'S GUIDE TO LIVING WITH CHRONIC PAIN

U.S. PAIN FOUNDATION

PAIN AWARENESS MONTH

Unmasking Pain: Because pain is more than a chart—it's a life.

Each September, the U.S. Pain Foundation leads a national campaign to increase understanding of chronic pain and elevate the voices of those living with it. In 2025, the campaign theme **#ThisIsPain** highlighted the hidden and complex realities of chronic pain, emphasizing that pain affects far more than physical health—it shapes daily life, relationships, work, school, and well-being.

Drawing on insights from the organization's national pain survey, the campaign shared stories and educational resources reflecting the experiences of adults and youth living with pain, caregivers, and health care providers. Throughout the month, U.S. Pain Foundation published weekly articles and shared daily statistics and insights to **deepen public understanding of chronic pain** and encourage greater recognition of its impact.

- **45% of active website users** engaged with Pain Awareness Month content
- Campaign content reached **61,495 people on Instagram**
- Grew the U.S. Pain Instagram community by **817 followers** in September
- Published **weekly articles** exploring caregiving, pediatric pain, and barriers to care
- **Mobilized volunteers nationwide** to secure Pain Awareness Month proclamations

KNOWvember

November: A month of KNOWledge.

Each November, the U.S. Pain Foundation leads the KNOWvember campaign, a month-long initiative designed to deepen understanding of critical issues in pain care.

In 2025, the **#KNOWresearch** campaign focused on pain research—why it matters, how it advances new treatments, and the vital role people with lived experience play in shaping scientific discovery. Through expert-led webinars, educational articles, and a researcher video series developed with the U.S. Association for the Study of Pain (USASP), the campaign **helped translate the science of pain research** for the patient community while highlighting the individuals working to improve care.

- **6,000+ new website users** engaged with KNOWvember content
- **580+ webinar registrants** across two live educational events
- Produced a **video series featuring 15 pain researchers** explaining their work
- Developed a **Pain Research Infographic** and **educational resource hub**
- Generated **151,000+ Facebook impressions** during the campaign

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Expanding knowledge, elevating the patient voice, and strengthening understanding of pain.

In 2025, U.S. Pain expanded education for patients, caregivers, clinicians, and policymakers through new resources, academic engagement, and national presentations. We released ***Supporting a Loved One with Chronic Pain***, a guide developed to help caregivers and care partners better understand and support those living with pain, and updated our **Chronic Pain Facts** resource to provide accessible, reliable information for the community.

U.S. Pain also continued elevating the patient voice in clinical, academic, and policy settings. Our team presented at major medical conferences and engaged directly with future clinicians at institutions such as **Tufts University School of Medicine, Brown University, and Johns Hopkins University**, helping deepen understanding of chronic pain and encourage more compassionate, patient-centered care. We also participated in the **U.S. Senate Wellness Fair**, providing educational resources on chronic pain to Senate staff and employees.

> U.S. Pain continues to serve as a bridge between people with pain, researchers, clinicians, and policymakers—ensuring that the lived experience of pain informs the future of care.

- Invited to speak to **5 medical schools** or residency programs to inform medical students about life with pain
- Presented at **15 conferences, research forums, and policy meetings** nationwide
- Highlights include **USASP,** the **American Academy of Pain Medicine**, the **American Society for Pain Management Nursing**, and the **American Diabetes Association National Policy Summit**
- Participated in **16 national conferences, events, and policy forums**
- Delivered educational sessions for **medical students at Tufts, Brown, and Johns Hopkins**
- Mailed **60,670 materials** free of charge to patients, health care professionals, caregivers, and advocates

Community education also remained a priority, with **Building Your Toolbox workshops** offering practical strategies for managing pain through mindfulness, movement, sound healing, creative expression, and more.

OUR CORPORATE COUNCIL

Support that helps drive progress in pain care.

Organizations participating in the U.S. Pain Foundation's Corporate Council provide vital support year-round for our education, advocacy, research engagement, and community programs. Their contributions help ensure people living with chronic pain have access to trusted resources, meaningful support, and a stronger voice in shaping the future of pain care.

We gratefully acknowledge our 2025 Corporate Council members.

AMGEN
kenvue
Lexicon pharmaceuticals
Lilly
PRIMUS PHARMACEUTICALS
Salix Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
sobi
VERTEX

To learn more about how you can get involved, visit uspainfoundation.org.