

PRESS RELEASE - November 7, 2001

ASHCROFT REASSURES OREGON DOCTORS ABOUT PAIN RELIEF

U.S. Attorney General, John Ashcroft, reassured all Oregon doctors that aggressive pain management is protected. He did this in letters addressed to both the Oregon Medical Association and Physicians for Compassionate Care dated November 6, 2001 (attached). PCC has mailed a copy of this letter to every doctor in Oregon.

Ashcroft's letter makes it perfectly clear that the DEA will not be looking at physicians' medical records but only the assisted-suicide reporting forms themselves in enforcing laws against the use of federally controlled substances for assisted suicide in Oregon. The letter emphasizes that aggressive pain management is protected.

"Any claims that this ruling against the use of federally controlled substances for assisted suicides might somehow target pain care are unfounded," said Dr. Gregory Hamilton of Physicians for Compassionate Care. "Any such claim that the DEA may be searching through medical records looking at prescribing practices is irresponsible and unfounded."