

Dr. Ezekiel Akande Talks About the Hidden Scapegoat of Opioid Addiction in the U.S.

BRENTWOOD, TN, UNITED STATES, June 2, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As an author, an anesthesiologist, and a long-time pain management physician in Brentwood, Tennessee, [Dr. Ezekiel Akande says](#) the national approach to opioid addiction is misguided at best, and literally criminal at worst. "It's a problem all over the world," Dr. Akande says, "but it's a real crisis here in America.

Just like the pandemic happening right now all over the world, opioid addiction is a crisis America can't seem to get a handle on. According to the American Society of Anesthesiologists*, the National Institute on Drug Abuse reports approximately 100 people a day die from opioid abuse and more than 2 million Americans abuse opioids every single day.

This is a real tragedy and a tragedy that can certainly be avoided, according to [Dr. Ezekiel Akande](#). However, the media likes to focus on the physician doing the prescribing as the primary cause of this national crisis, he says. "I've seen too many good doctors used as scapegoats," he adds.

"We, as physicians, are expected to help our patients relieve their aches and pains," Dr. Akande says. "That's what we do. And with opioids being one of the best methods of relieving severe pain, it's obviously one of the best methods in our arsenal of treatments that help our patients achieve this goal."

Contrast that scenario with the so-called "pill mills," where doctors will boldly meet with patients to exchange prescriptions for cash, Dr. Ezekiel Akande says.

These are 2 scenarios that both contribute to the opioid problem in America, he explains, but there's a huge difference between the two. On one hand, you have a physician who truly cares about their patients' wellbeing. In the second case, you have outright criminal behavior that



needs to be stopped and punished with jail time.

Instead of using available resources and personnel on locating and shutting down the pills mills, Dr. Akande says, the government is coming down on all prescribing physicians.

Some honest physicians are being thrown in jail, Dr. Ezekiel Akande says, which does nothing to solve the opioid problem in America. "This grossly unfair treatment of doctors who are simply trying to help their patients is apparently supposed to serve as a warning sign to other doctors who do the same, Dr. Akande adds. It's supposed to encourage us to find alternative methods of treating pain for our patients so the addiction scenario never occurs, he explains. "But if there were an alternative method of treating the pain successfully," he continues, "we'd already be using it."

The result is frustrated patients who end up not having their pain resolved, and continued abuse from the pill mills who continue to operate illegally and continue to fuel the problem.

"It's like saying gun ammunition shops are to blame for murders because they sell bullets to their customers," [Dr. Ezekeiel Akande, says](#). It just doesn't make sense when you really think about it.

I know the answer to the opioid epidemic is complicated, Dr. Akande continues. He says the problem is not something that can be remedied in a week or even a month. "There are multiple pieces of a very complex puzzle involved in looking at this crisis - much more than I can explain in a few minutes, he says, "and these factors play upon each other and affect the long-term outcome in different ways," he adds.

But punishing doctors who are stuck in the middle trying to help their patients isn't the way to solve the problem, Dr. Ezekiel Akande says. That actually results in patients being left high and dry without any pain relief at all, resulting in the "pill mill" scenario mentioned earlier.

"It's a long road and a hard battle," says Dr. Akande, "but I'm determined to fight it for the patients who deserve it."

* <https://www.asahq.org/whensecondscount/about/>

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