Resolution: 912
(I-16)

Introduced by: American Academy of Pain Medicine

Subject: Neuropathic Pain Recognized as a Disease

Referred to: Reference Committee K
(Paul A. Friedrichs, MD, Chair)

Whereas, Neuropathic pain is characterized by neuroplastic changes that cause sensitization of
the nervous system. Those changes result in anatomical and physiological changes that affect
neurological function, result in long-term potentiation and gene expression changes that then
allow the pain to continue with or without any further peripheral input, lower pain threshold, and
this dysfunction then also accounts for the epiphenomena associated with the disease, including
cognitive, emotional, memory, and motor changes, which then becomes the illness of chronic
pain; and

Whereas, The Institute of Medicine Report “Relieving Pain in America, A Blueprint for
Transforming Prevention, Care, Education, and Research,” released June 29, 2011, and the
National Pain Strategy, released on March 19, 2016, have suggested chronic (neuropathic) pain
as a disease; and

Whereas, All types of chronic pain has neuropathic pain as part of the illness and our AMA
CSAPH has tacitly referred to chronic neuropathic pain as a disease; and

Whereas, The designation of neuropathic pain as a disease will have significant benefits for
research, funding, education, and applications to improve clinical practice, such as reducing the
opioid crisis we currently face; and

Whereas, Our AMA has declared alcoholism, addiction, and obesity as diseases, using similar
criteria; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association recognize neuropathic pain as a disease
state with multiple pathophysiological aspects requiring a range of interventions to advance
neuropathic pain treatment and prevention. (New HOD Policy)

References:
1. Institute of Medicine Report Relieving Pain in America, A Blueprint for Transforming Prevention, Care, Education, and Research, released June 29, 2011.

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

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