|  |
| --- |
| **Sidebar 1. Genesis of the White Paper**Beginning in 2009, a diverse group of medical, professional, and consumer advocacy organizations—known collectively as the *FibroCollaborative*—was brought together to discuss strategies for improving the diagnosis and management of FM. Meeting on multiple occasions, the group helped to develop a number of educational programs and peer-reviewed publications aimed at offering primary care providers the tools necessary to efficiently and effectively recognize and treat patients with FM. The *FibroCollaborative* has been facilitated by Pfizer Inc.Expanding upon the mission of the *FibroCollaborative*, the Global Fibromyalgia and Chronic Widespread Pain Advisory Board was convened in 2014. Despite diverse backgrounds, clinical experience, and points of view on disease management, this group of 11 experts from across the globe shares a common goal: to improve the care of individuals with FM. While Pfizer Inc was the catalyst for the meeting and provided funding, it was this group of experts who generated ideas and built consensus on how to translate the complexities associated with FM and other central pain conditions into meaningful action.Prior to the consensus discussion that became the basis of this white paper, the advisors gave didactic, evidence-based presentations on topics such as the global similarities and differences in perceptions of chronic pain; pathophysiology and mechanisms of chronic pain; where FM fits within the pain continuum; the epidemiology of FM and chronic widespread pain; diagnostic challenges in different regions of the world; and new insights from brain imaging in patients with FM. In addition, the advisors shared perspectives on FM and chronic widespread pain in the United States, Europe, Japan, Brazil, Denmark, and China.Drawing on their experience as well as the medical literature, the advisors then debated issues such as:* The lack of confidence among clinicians in diagnosing and managing chronic pain conditions such as FM
* Ongoing skepticism about the disorder
* Fragmentation of FM data dissemination
* Lack of unified diagnostic and treatment guidelines
* Unclear regulatory pathways in certain regions that might stifle innovation
* Barriers to and enablers of an effective provider/patient relationship and actionable ways in which these can be addressed

In the course of the meeting, the advisors stressed the value of sharing their insights and observations with the broader medical community—ideally, in the form of a white paper. The vision for the white paper was to set forth key barriers and knowledge gaps, the identification of which could lead to actionable steps toward their resolution—including simplification and communication of the most important information in an effort to help bolster advocacy, enhance clinical practice, and, ultimately, improve patient care. The issues they identified as paramount to patient management are outlined here.The members of the group received an honorarium from Pfizer Inc for their participation at the advisory board meeting; they did not, however, receive compensation for authoring this white paper. |