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I live with a painful connective tissue disorder called Ehlers Danlos syndrome and chronic migraines. It took six years to get a diagnosis and during those six years no one would take my pain seriously. I birthed two children naturally and never wanted to have to take medications

The pain became so unbearable I contemplated ending my life on a daily basis. Since no doctor could prescribe proper pain management I became desperate. I sought out illicit substances to find relief. Because of my naivety and lack of medical guidance I ended up down a dark hole of addiction. I could have easily lost everything including my life. I ended up quitting fentanyl cold turkey. Bed bound and in absolute hell for two weeks I was determined to never touch an opiate again. After withdrawals had stopped I was back to being non functional and trapped due to my pain, unable to be a good mother or perform at work. This full circle took me back to the suffering and I was reminded of why I was desperate for relief and had taken matters into my own hands. By the time I finally received a proper diagnosis through a geneticist it was 2015. Even with my diagnosis I had to fight to gain safe access to pain management despite my moral and ethical code. I never wanted to have to take pain meds or be enslaved in any capacity. Now I have to travel two hours one way to pain management. I was on a regiment that was working for several years. New laws were passed and I was forced to switch medications which are now less effective than before. Often times the pharmacy is out of my meds due to shortages in manufacturing. My point is please stop punishing doctors and pain patients who need these medications to lead quality lives. The hoop jumping for access, the restrictive prescription laws and the reduction in manufacturing is hurting people who truly have a hard enough time. People who abuse these substances have given the patients who need these substances a bad rap. Please consider safe access and less restrictive policies around pain management.