

# Increasing Patient Care and Practice Profits:

Could laser therapy be your solution?



The environment in which professional medical practitioners operate is growing increasingly complex. Given changes to reimbursement models and growing pressure on profit margins, it is important for practitioners to look at expanding their revenue streams with new technologies that satisfy patient needs while creating new sources of income. Medical laser therapy meets both criteria by allowing medical practices to offer less invasive pain management alternatives that provide additional income opportunities.



Cosmetic procedure and pain control market segments are **booming** in the United States.



There are over **200,000** health care providers in the United States using lasers in their practice and over **750,000** U.S. based laser therapy patients.



**\$560-\$635 billion** spent annually by consumers on pain control in the United States.



It is estimated that the North American medical laser therapies are a **\$3.2 billion** opportunity.



The global medical lasers market was valued at \$5.1 billion in 2016 and is projected to grow at a **CAGR of 13.4% through 2023.**

Medical practitioners looking to offset revenue pressure should consider increasing practice profitability by providing alternative options for acute and chronic pain conditions. By implementing new treatment technologies such as MLS laser therapy, a type of medical laser, practitioners can leverage market trends, expand revenue opportunities and provide a better patient experience.

#### The top four drivers impacting professional medical practices are:

1. Revenue pressure due to reduced reimbursement and changing health insurance models.
2. Rising drug costs, concerns about drug dependencies and the need for alternative non-drug pain relief therapies.
3. The aging population's increasing need for complementary and non-pharmaceutical pain management alternatives.
4. Demand for less invasive, more effective pain management alternatives in the Millennial market.

Consumers (particularly of the 25-44 age category) are looking for **natural, drug-free treatments**, to which lasers can be an ideal remedy.

# 1

## Revenue pressure due to reduced reimbursement rates and changing health insurance models

A recent survey by *Medical Economics* illustrates how widespread the impact of reduced reimbursement rates is across the healthcare profession:

- 72 percent of survey respondents ranked reimbursement and payment pressures as the most critical challenges they faced.
- 37 percent of respondents ranked higher deductibles and co-pays as the most significant issue they deal with.
- 20 percent of those surveyed said that payer denials were also one of the three most critical issues they face.
- 16 percent of respondents reported that payers shifting risk was a key reimbursement issue.

On a daily basis, healthcare providers must deal with reduced reimbursement rates, rate increases below cost increases, and changing reimbursement models. Providers also face challenging revenue cycles where higher denial rates decrease revenue while driving up labor and documentation costs. In order to remain successful in such a market, proactive medical professional practices are seeking new streams of revenue while looking to grow their cash-based business. MLS laser therapy is a promising treatment option that can mitigate the challenges discussed above.



# 2

## Rising drug costs, concerns about drug dependencies and the need for alternative non-drug pain relief therapies

Beyond the increase in drug costs, for medical practices the need to offer new non-pharmaceutical pain services is key to ensuring the best patient care. In fact, in many States this is now being mandated by law. Given the well-documented opioid crisis in the United States, medical practitioners are looking to decrease opioid usage while also reducing the use of alternative drugs, which may have their own unwanted side effects. This is where non-pharmaceutical alternatives such as medical laser therapy can fill the gap in treatment plans.

Over the past several decades the efficacy of MLS laser therapy, both in conjunction with pharmaceutical therapies and as a standalone modality, has been proven in scientific studies. Patient populations with knee pain, rheumatoid and other forms of arthritis, sports injuries, cancer and other painful conditions have been successfully treated with medical lasers, reducing their need for pharmaceutical pain relievers.

In 2016, 11.5 million Americans misused opioid medications, which contributed to the death of 17,087 prescription drug users<sup>1</sup>. These staggering statistics have heightened the demand in the US healthcare market for therapies that address both acute and chronic pain conditions without the use of pharmaceutical therapies.

For example, recent research showed that medical lasers are an effective pain-relief modality, allowing cancer patients to reduce medication usage as part of their analgesia protocol and reducing the likelihood that these patients will have a chronic dependence on opioids or other pain relief drugs.

### MLS laser therapy can help medical providers treat inflammation and pain associated with:

- Pain Management
- Musculoskeletal issues
- Arthritis
- Wound Healing
- Dermatology
- Nerve regeneration

1. Hedegaard H, Warner M, Miniño AM. Drug overdose deaths in the United States, 1999–2016. NCHS Data Brief, no 294. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2017/ CDC. Wide-ranging online data for epidemiologic research (WONDER). Atlanta, GA: CDC, National Center for Health Statistics; 2016. Available at <http://wonder.cdc.gov>



# 3

## The aging population increasing the need for complementary and non-pharmaceutical pain management alternatives

As the Baby Boomer population ages, the percentage of patients seeking treatment for chronic pain will increase. Chronic pain, without management, can negatively impact quality of life and can lead to depression, substance abuse, anxiety and other problems.

According to Today's Geriatric Medicine, a study of more than 7,000 adults aged 65 and older found that:

- 52.9% had complained of bothersome pain in the past month.
- More than 20 million older adults suffer from chronic pain every year in the United States.
- Among those responding, approximately 75% reported experiencing pain in multiple sites with the presence of pain strongly associated with a decrease in physical function.

Unfortunately, statistics also show that older adults are more likely to use and overuse alcohol and drugs in an attempt to deal with their pain. As such, it is imperative that medical professionals consider how to help reduce and alleviate the pain of the senior population using methods that do not rely on potentially addictive substances in order to successfully treat this growing patient base. By integrating MLS laser therapy into your practice, you can tap into the growing Baby Boomer pain management with an effective and profitable alternative or complement to drug therapies.



# 4

## Demand for natural pain relief in the Millennial market

On the other end of the age spectrum, Millennials are also increasing demand for natural pain relief services such as medical lasers. Research shows that younger adults prefer lifestyle changes and natural remedies over taking opioid-based medications for acute and chronic pain management.

Despite their young age, Millennials often experience chronic pain due to spending their days hunched over computers, smartphones, and tablets, as well as spending their free time playing sports. According to a survey commissioned by the American Society of Anesthesiologists:

- Nearly 75 percent of millennials surveyed reported having acute pain.
- Almost 60 percent reported having chronic pain.
- Millennials are half as likely as baby boomers to turn to opioids to manage pain
- One in five millennials regrets ever using opioids over natural pain management.

MLS laser therapy provides a natural alternative for pain management that is appealing to Millennials, who value their health and are willing to pay for acute and preventative pain therapies. As such, expanding the profitability of your practice with MLS laser therapy can help your practice become a trusted pain management partner with patients in the Millennial generation. These relationships can span the full spectrum of these patients' lives, providing ongoing revenue opportunities now and in the years to come.





## Increasing Practice Profits by Integrating MLS Laser Therapy

In addition to improved patient care, many practices are pleased with the significant and positive impact MLS laser therapy has on their bottom line. As reimbursements continue to decline and the path to reimbursement becomes more complicated and costly, adding affordable cash-based services are often just what the Doctor ordered. The average practice generates about \$10k in revenue per month and nets an average of \$6k in profits.

Given the continually evolving healthcare landscape, professional medical practices must proactively consider the actions they need to take to remain viable in the future market. Practices must stay on top of the trends discussed here in order to successfully redefine the way they operate. Medical practices should focus on several key areas including recognizing the shifting demographics of chronic pain patients, as well as the demand for more less-invasive, non-pharmaceutical pain management treatments. Practices should also be implementing cash-based revenue streams to replace profit lost from other sources.

**Better medicine equals better business.**

Find out more at [www.celasers.com/learnmore](http://www.celasers.com/learnmore)

## Resources:

Kash, B., & Tan, D. (-0001, November 30). Physician Group Practice Trends: A Comprehensive Review. Retrieved from <http://hospital-medical-management.imedpub.com/physician-group-practice-trends-a-comprehensive-review.php?aid=9343>

Cotler, H. B., Chow, R. T., Hamblin, M. R., & Carroll, J. (2015). The Use of Low Level Laser Therapy (LLLT) For Musculoskeletal Pain. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4743666/>

Brosseau, L., Welch, V., Wells, G. A., Bie, R. D., Gam, A., Harman, K., . . . Tugwell, P. (2005, October 19). Low level laser therapy (Classes I, II and III) for treating rheumatoid arthritis - Brosseau, L - 2005 | Cochrane Library. Retrieved from <https://www.cochranelibrary.com/cdsr/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD002049.pub2/abstract>

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