

Pain Management Programmes

A booklet to inform people about pain management and to help them decide whether they wish to join a Pain Management Programme



Irving Building
Pain Centre
0161 206 4136

**Saving lives,
Improving lives**

Patient information

At your assessment the Pain Centre team decided that you may benefit by attending a Pain Management Programme. Before you are given a place, however, we need you to read and consider the following information. If you then wish to attend a programme you will need to sign the separate consent form. You will be listed for a programme once the consent form has been completed.

Before signing the consent form it is essential that you understand what the Pain Management Programme involves and agree that it is suitable for your needs. You must also be committed to the pain management approach if it is to succeed. We therefore ask you to give careful thought to this. Sign only when you are sure that you can give the necessary commitment.

If you need any more information to help you decide, please ring the Manchester and Salford Pain Centre on:

 **0161 206 4136**

If no one is available to deal with your enquiry, please leave a number where you can be contacted and we will endeavour to do so as soon as we can.

Living with chronic pain

Chronic pain means pain that has persisted for more than 6 months. In some cases it can last for most of a lifetime. It is a surprisingly common problem. Some studies suggest that as many as one in ten people in the United Kingdom have some form of chronic pain condition.

The Manchester and Salford Pain Centre sees many people with chronic pain. Sometimes we are able to offer treatments to help ease the pain but very often pain relief is not possible.

We understand that living with chronic pain means more than living with an unpleasant sensation. It can have many negative physical, psychological and social effects. That is why a physiotherapist and a psychologist are needed to assess people with chronic pain, as well as a doctor.

Although pain can affect people in different ways and to different extents, some common experiences for people living with chronic pain are listed next.

- They cut down on work, social and recreational activity. They lose fitness and so everyday tasks become more difficult. They lose confidence in their ability to do things that they once took for granted

- By cutting back, life becomes less rewarding and mood suffers. With less to distract them from pain it can become difficult to think about anything else.
- Sleep suffers and they feel unrefreshed
- Worries about the cause of their pain take over. People can become angry at their situation and feel misunderstood by people around them. Relationship problems may develop
- People may be taking more and more painkillers but to less effect
- After having had pain for so long, the future seems bleak and they feel helpless in the face of it

Common effects of chronic pain

Who are Pain Management Programmes for?

Pain Management Programmes are designed for people with chronic pain for whom previous attempts at treatment have failed to relieve their pain or return them to normal activity. There are now no longer any appropriate treatments left. Chronic pain has affected their ability to cope successfully with various aspects of their lives.

Pain Management Programmes, therefore, are for people who accept that they have chronic pain and do not want any more treatment or investigations. Instead, they wish to learn how pain has affected them and are prepared to apply new skills to reduce the effects of pain on them. They are committed to improving the quality of their lives despite the pain.

People are selected for a programme only after they have been carefully assessed by the Pain Centre team and it is established that they are safe to participate in exercise without coming to any harm.

Why am I suitable for a Pain Management Programme?

At your assessment the team came to the conclusion that you have a chronic pain problem and that the Pain Centre cannot offer you any treatment to cure or lessen your pain. However, we have seen how your pain has affected you physically and psychologically. This will have been discussed with you at your assessment.

We now believe that you can begin to make positive changes to help you cope with your pain.

How could a Pain Management Programme help me?

By using the information and skills taught on the programme, you will be able to:

- Be more confident in your daily activities
- Practice regular exercise and improve your fitness
- Set personal goals and achieve more rewarding activity
- Improve your pacing of activity and keep your pain under control
- Use better postures for work and leisure
- Use coping skills to reduce mental stress and depression
- Use relaxation to reduce muscle tension
- Reduce the influence of pain on your relationships
- Improve your sleep
- Reduce or stop your medications, if appropriate

- Deal successfully with flare-ups
- Get the best from your doctor
- Learn from other people with chronic pain who have similar problems

What will the programme consist of?

There will be about 10 people in the group. Each person will have a chronic pain problem similar to yours.

The time will be divided roughly in the following way:

- 45% with a psychologist,
- 45% with a physiotherapist
and
- 10% with a doctor

All parts of the programme are equally important and work together for a Pain Management approach.

What will the programme consist of?

The psychologist will:

- Help you to recognise the stressful effects of chronic pain
- Instruct you in relaxation techniques
- Explain how mood is affected by pain
- Teach you to understand how pain influences (and is influenced by) your thoughts, beliefs and behaviour
- Help you to develop and apply coping skills
- Teach you self-help techniques to help you sleep
- Teach communication skills to help relationship difficulties associated with pain
- Help you to address the things in life which stop you from making and keeping changes in your lifestyle

The physiotherapist will:

- Explain the effects of reduced activity and excessive rest on the body
- Instruct you in safe exercise to help you improve your strength, stamina and suppleness
- Help you to plan your own exercise regime and keep motivated
- Teach you how to pace your activity
- Help you set your own work, recreational and social goals
- Instruct you in better postures and movement to improve your ability to do things
- Help you prepare to manage flare-ups successfully

The doctor will:

- Teach you about chronic pain, the difference between acute and chronic pain and why hurt does not always mean harm
- Explain the investigations you've had and what they mean
- Explain the treatments you've had and why they haven't worked
- Help you plan the reduction of unhelpful drugs
- Help you to get the best from your doctor

All 3 professions are committed to helping you by supervising your attempts to apply these skills in your everyday life

How is the information taught?

This is done by:

- Group discussions
- Group activities
- Problem-solving exercises, individually and as a group
- Homework
- Partner sessions

Handouts will be given to help you remember but we strongly suggest you make your own notes as well.

What is my commitment to the programme?

- You need to attend every session of the programme
- You need to participate in group activities and discussions
- You need to complete the homework, so that the Pain Centre team can monitor how you are doing

When will the programme run?

Details about the programme will have been given to you at your assessment. In addition, there will be **follow-up days**.

We also need to give you two standard assessments so that we can monitor your progress and see how effective the programme has been. We may ask some participants to attend the Centre for several hours on a day shortly before and then again shortly after the programme itself.

We will inform you of the programme dates and the dates for assessments and follow-up days as soon as they are available.

If you are to manage your pain more successfully people around you need to know how to support you. To do this, they may need to change how they understand your problem.

For this reason, your partner or someone close to you is invited to one of the sessions. **We strongly recommend that they attend.** The details of this will be sent along with the dates of the programme.

Common worries about programmes

The psychologist will be looking for imaginary pain

The psychologist will not be looking for imaginary pain. We understand that the pain is real. Psychologists are skilled in helping ordinary people live with problems such as the stress of chronic pain.

I've tried exercise before and it made my pain a lot worse

This is a common experience. However, the physiotherapist will guide you to set your own graded exercise programme. In this way, you can pace up your exercise when you are ready to and so remain in control of your pain.

It is important to realise that it is natural in the short term to have some extra discomfort when starting an exercise programme. The physiotherapist will help you focus on the longer term goal of improved fitness.

What if I find Pain Management too difficult?

We understand that trying out new skills is never easy and it is normal to have difficulties and setbacks.

You may need to persevere with Pain Management techniques for several months before you start to experience benefits and so you mustn't expect immediate results. However, the Pain Centre staff will provide support and encouragement so long as you are committed to trying.

Some important points

It is vital that you attend every component of the programme. Once you have been given the dates you will need to make arrangements to make this possible. If you cannot make any part of the programme you need to contact us immediately. It may be better for you to attend a later programme when your full attendance is possible.

Once you have started a programme, more than one excused absence will mean that that you will not be permitted to rejoin the group.

This is because:

- The rest of the programme would not make sense to you
- It upsets the other members of the group

Places are limited for each programme and there is a waiting list. If you take a place and don't attend then you are denying someone else the chance of taking part in the programme.

We will inform your GP of your progress at the end of the programme.

We will also inform your GP if you decide not to complete the programme.

In Summary

The Pain Management Programme will not provide a cure for your pain or pain relief. However, it will help you to lead a more useful and rewarding life with your pain. In order to do this, you need to be committed to change by applying the skills taught on the programme. Only in this way can the Pain Centre team supervise your efforts and guide you towards a more fulfilling life.

Our commitment

- Teach you pain management techniques
- Supervise you in your attempts to apply pain management techniques

Your commitment

- Attend each session
- Participate fully in group activities
- Complete homework
- Apply pain management techniques in everyday life

Graduate comments

For those who successfully use pain management techniques the rewards can be tremendous. These are some comments from people who have completed the pain management programme...

“Joining the pain management programme is the best thing that has happened to me since I became a chronic pain sufferer”

“The course really opened my eyes, I thought my life was on the scrap heap, my back ruling my life. Now I know it is myself who can ‘pace’ my life”

“I’m sure that apart from getting my life back, it will be a life enriched with a far greater confidence than I have ever had before”

“I have benefited greatly when I exercise. I feel a lot better - my pain is still there but I’m learning to cope with it”

“I handle stressful situations much better and don’t feel depressed”

You may find it helpful to view our video clips of interviews with patients who have completed a PMP. These videos can be downloaded from the Salford Royal website.

If you type the following link into your internet browser it should take you straight to the videos.

 <http://www.srft.nhs.uk/about-us/depts/neuro-pain/services-provided/pmp/pt-interviews/>

If you have any questions please contact:

 **Manchester and Salford Pain Centre,**
Salford Royal,
Stott Lane,
Salford, M6 8HD,

 **0161 206 4136**

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If you need this information leaflet translated, please telephone:

Polish

Jeżeli potrzebne jest Państwu to tłumaczenie, proszę zadzwonić pod numer.

Urdu

اگر آپ کو اس ترجمانی کی ضرورت ہے تو مہربانی کر کے فون کریں۔

Arabic

إذا كنتم بحاجة الى تفسير او ترجمة هذا الرجاء الاتصال

Chinese

如果需要翻译，请拨打电话

Farsi

اگر به ترجمه این نیاز دارید ، لطفاً تلفن کنید

0161 206 0224

or Email:

InterpretationandTrans@srft.nhs.uk

Salford Royal operates a smoke-free policy.

For advice on stopping smoking contact the Hospital Specialist Stop Smoking Service on 0161 206 1779

This is a teaching hospital which plays an important role in the training of future doctors. The part patients play in this process is essential to make sure that we produce the right quality doctors for all of our futures. If at any time you would prefer not to have students present please inform the doctor or nurses and this will not affect your care in anyway.

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