

## What is a Pain Management Programme?

Our programmes use education and practice sessions to help people with persistent pain to manage their pain and activities of daily living better. While attending a programme you will develop skills and understanding that help you to manage your pain.

These skills include:

- How to live well with pain, by engaging in activities that are meaningful to you
- How to move with more confidence and build flexibility and strength
- How to relax both your mind and body
- How to balance activity levels
- Understanding the emotional impact of living with persistent pain
- How to improve your confidence in coping with your persistent pain

## What types of programmes are available?

We currently have three main types available. Face to face programmes where you attend in real time with clinicians and other people experiencing persistent pain; virtual programmes where you attend a virtual room with clinicians and other people experiencing persistent pain and a self-directed online programme where you work through modules in your own time and are allocated a coach to support you.



## How can a programme help me?

When you learn to manage your persistent pain more effectively you may find your quality of life also improves. If you are engaging in a face to face or a virtual programme the feedback from people who have been through our programmes and scientific evidence suggests the shared environment of a group setting is beneficial in helping us realise that we are not alone in coping with persistent pain. However the self-directed programme provides some flexibility to still gain the relevant information but it can be fitted in around work/childcare/other life commitments as you complete it when it is convenient to you but within an agreed time-frame.



## Who facilitates the programmes?

In the case of face to face or virtual programmes the sessions are delivered by clinicians such as psychologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and nurses. We regularly invite previous programme participants to speak at our programmes to share their experiences with you. In the self-directed programme you will experience a mixture of videos recorded by the clinicians or presentations geared to guide you through pain management.

## Who can attend the programmes?

People with persistent pain, whose lives are being significantly affected in terms of reduced functioning and quality of life, find it helpful to attend.

Pain often has a negative impact on one's mood, stress and anxiety levels.

It is recommended that you have had all appropriate investigations for your pain and tried other treatments to rule out anything that can be dealt with medically.

Before being invited to attend a programme you will need to attend an assessment to confirm that a programme will be helpful for you. During this assessment you will have the opportunity to ask any questions about the programmes.



## **Can anyone with persistent pain attend a programme?**

Not everyone may benefit from a programme and this is why you will need to be assessed before you are invited to attend. Some individuals may need to see a member of the team on a 1-1 basis for some appointments before being ready to join a programme.

You will not be invited to join a programme if there are any issues you are dealing with such as (but not exclusively):

- a medical problem which needs treatment
- have severe depression or someone close to you has recently passed away
- are unable to understand the spoken language of the programme; however literacy problems should NOT be a barrier to attendance so please let us know so we can support you
- have ongoing drug or alcohol problems
- are waiting for further investigations or treatments which you expect will solve your pain problem



## **If I don't want to attend a programme, what other help can I receive from the service?**

If you choose not to attend a programme, you can still benefit from individual input from our multi-disciplinary team. However, the power of our programmes cannot be underestimated and we would strongly urge you to express any concerns regarding engaging with a programme with your clinician at your assessment appointment.

## **How long do the sessions last for?**

The face to face and virtual programmes run for up to 8 sessions. For face to face programmes this is usually one day per week from approximately 9.45-3.00/3.30pm. Our virtual programmes will typically be shorter in duration, usually a half a day. There are frequent breaks throughout the sessions where you will be encouraged to move around. We expect participants to continue engaging in pain management and practising skills learnt in between the sessions. A follow-up session is usually arranged after the end of the programme.

We expect you to be able to commit to ALL sessions for face to face and virtual programmes and to complete all of the modules on our online self-directed programme. We understand that all of our programmes are a big commitment and timing is important. So, if you are unable to commit to the whole duration, please discuss this with us.

We run groups regularly throughout the year and so you will be invited to join the next available programme or if an online self-directed programme you can start this virtually straight away once all the relevant forms have been completed.

## **What will the environment be like?**

We deliver the face to face programmes in multiple locations across Dorset and make every effort to offer participants a group in their preferred location. All programme sessions are relaxed and varied so that you do not have to sit or stand for long periods. We encourage participants to move around as much as they need. We aim to make the sessions as interactive as possible so you will have chance to ask questions throughout the course. We usually invite up to 10-12 people for each face to face and virtual programme.

Locations across Dorset



## **What do I need to bring with me?**



For the face to face programme you can bring anything that makes you more comfortable e.g. cushions, footrest. It is also advisable to bring a packed lunch. We will provide tea, coffee, water and biscuits and ask for a small donation to cover this. You will also be given your programme workbook on the first day of the programme which we expect participants to bring each week. For the virtual and self-directed

programmes you will be engaging in this from your home so we encourage you to find a comfortable private space so as you can concentrate without being disturbed.

### **Will my pain be cured?**

Science and research have not yet discovered a definite cure for persistent pain. However, most people attending our programmes report that their pain experience is improved and that they feel more confident self-managing it on a day-to-day basis with the new strategies they learn. As a result, they feel emotionally stronger and more able to cope with the pain. Meeting other people with similar challenges can help everyone feel more supported and less alone.

### **Can I bring someone with me to the face to face programme?**

Due to confidential nature of the discussion, it is not possible to bring a friend or family member with you...what happens in the programme stays in the programme! However, if the group wishes, we can organise a special "Friends and Family Session" where each participant can bring along someone they would like to share this experience with, so that person can begin to understand more about persistent pain as well.

### **What can I expect at the end of a programme?**

By the end of the programme you will have better quality of life, regain interest in things that bring you joy and feel happier in yourself despite pain. To have long-term benefit you will need to continue practising what you have learnt from the programme.

### **What support is available after the programmes?**

People often make friends whilst attending the face to face or virtual programmes and create their own support network.

All clients can access our helpline at any stage .See our website for details: [www.dorsetpain.org](http://www.dorsetpain.org)



### **What do people say is most helpful about our programmes?**

- 'Shared understanding with others in pain, knowing I am not the only one' (face to face/virtual)
- 'Explanations of pain and impact on wellbeing' (all programmes)
- 'All the different sections were beneficial in understanding all the elements of pain and effects on mental and physical health' (all programmes)
- 'Helped me to have a more positive attitude' (all programmes)
- 'Having the workbook/information sent out to me via email/to keep the self-directed online programme as an ongoing resource' (all programmes)
- 'To be able to fit it in around my other responsibilities is helpful' (self-directed programme)
- 'To be able to rewind if I have lost concentration is a godsend (self-directed programme)

**Thank you for your interest!**

**We look forward to helping you in the best way possible.**