

What is Chronic Pain?

Chronic pain is any long lasting pain that has not been relieved by treating the cause, if known, or by trying to relieve the pain itself. It is a common problem that affects around 1 in 10 adults. The impact of such pain on people's lives varies from slight restrictions to complete loss of independence.

Those who are referred to the Pain Management Group Programme often have a long history of consulting different medical specialists and trying a range of treatments. Unfortunately, none of these have had lasting benefit. Our current state of knowledge does not enable us to understand or treat what has gone wrong for each person in pain. It appears pain can arise through complex patterns of over-activity in the nervous system, which at present we are unable to prevent.

This whole process is demoralising and over time activity level, mood, work, relationships and leisure activities can all be affected by living with pain. In pain management we are aiming to introduce coping strategies that will help you rebuild as satisfying a life as possible despite continuing pain.

Pain Management Group Programme

This multidisciplinary programme is held for small groups of people, usually 8- 10 members, all of whom have chronic pain. The groups meet for half a day each week for 8 weeks, with follow up at 1 and 6 months. Several members of the pain management team are involved in the groups, each bringing their own specialist skills.

The overall aim of the programme is to reduce the disability and distress caused by chronic pain by teaching physical, psychological and practical techniques to improve quality of life.

Between sessions you will be asked to practice some of the skills and approaches to managing pain discussed in the group. Being able to eventually incorporate pain management skills into your everyday life is the aim, but this can take time and practice.

Learning to manage pain is very individual- what works well for one person will not necessarily help another. There will therefore be aspects of the programme that help some more than others, but evaluation shows that most people find that what they have learnt on the

programme enables them to progress towards a better quality of life.

Sessions will include:

- education to help you understand the pain system
- learning to pace your activity and manage activities of daily living without increasing pain
- developing a range of relaxation skills
- learning ways to manage your feelings of frustration, depression, and worry
- a supervised exercise programme and an introduction to Alexander Technique teaching
- managing pain-killing medication
- managing sleep difficulties
- acupuncture massage
- communicating with others about living with pain
- dealing with flare-ups and how to continue maintaining progress in future

After the Programme

Follow-up group meetings are held about 6 weeks after the end of the 8-week programme.

Each person will have the opportunity to attend individual sessions with one of the psychology team to review progress.

We can advise about making plans to enable return to work and put you in contact with other agencies and schemes that can offer further help with employment.

Clinic Staff:

Consultant Anaesthetists

Dr. Brenda Buxton
Dr. Sarang Puranik
Dr. Prabhu Gandhimani

Clinical Psychologists

Dr. Ann Gold
Dr. Nicola Smart
Mrs. Alison Lane

Specialist Physiotherapists

Amanda Clifford
Janet Briggs

Alexander Technique Teacher

Dee Fitzgerald

Acupuncturist, TENS teacher

James Treacher

Acute Pain Nurse

Margaret Uchendu

Office Manager

Polly Anderson

Receptionist/Secretary

Julia Williams

Medical Secretary

Gill Gibbs

PAIN MANAGEMENT GROUP PROGRAMME

**Pain Management Service
Kingston Hospital
Galsworthy Road
Kingston on Thames
Surrey KT2 7QB**

**Tel: 020-8546-7711 x 2563
Fax: 020-8546-2199**