

## **Pain Management Service**

### **Clinical services for people with chronic benign pain**

#### **What is Chronic Pain?**

Chronic pain is pain that persists beyond the expected time of healing, or occurs in diseases in which healing does not take place. It may result from accident or injury or many medical conditions such as arthritis but can also occur when no obvious cause can be found. It is a complex condition associated with increased sensitisation of the nervous system, which often fails to respond adequately to direct treatments, leaving many without lasting pain relief.

Living with chronic pain is extremely challenging as it can severely limit quality of life, making it difficult to carry out everyday activities including work; people experiencing chronic pain often report feeling low and distressed. Pain management services aim to restore to as normal as possible the lives of people affected by chronic pain.

#### **Kingston Hospital Chronic Pain Management Service**

The Chronic Pain Management Service offers a range of medical and non-medical interventions for people living with chronic pain. The multidisciplinary team includes consultant anaesthetists with a special interest in pain, clinical psychologists, specialist physiotherapists, an acupuncturist, an Alexander technique teacher and office support staff, who between them combine many years of clinical expertise. Recognising chronic pain as a complex problem, we offer an integrated multidisciplinary approach to the management of chronic pain. Following comprehensive assessment, we conduct appropriate evidence-based interventions aimed at reducing pain, disability and psychological distress and improving quality of life.

Patients with chronic pain are referred to the Chronic Pain Management Service by health professionals, including general practitioners, extended scope practitioner physiotherapists and hospital-based consultants, such as orthopaedic surgeons, neurosurgeons, neurologists and rheumatologists.

We provide advice and treatment for a wide range of chronic pain conditions, including: chronic back, head and neck pain, post surgical pain, reflex sympathetic dystrophies, post-herpetic neuralgia and other neuropathic pain, irritable bowel syndrome, chronic pelvic pain, vulvodynia/ vestibulitis, temporomandibular joint pain, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome and various neurological conditions.

#### **Range of Services**

At Kingston Hospital, there are two aspects to the Chronic Pain Management Service, the medical assessment and interventions offered by the Consultant Anaesthetists and non-medical approaches offered by other members of the pain management therapy team. However, as stated earlier, all specialists work alongside each other to provide an integrated service; some patients will see just one practitioner and others, when judged appropriate, may best be helped by a combination of physical and psychological therapies.

## **Pain Clinic**

On referral, patients are normally seen by a consultant anaesthetist for a comprehensive assessment and following this, advice on treatment or further investigation where necessary or referral to the multidisciplinary pain management team.

Direct treatment may include **Nerve Blocks**: We perform most therapeutic procedures as day cases, either in Day Case Unit, or if imaging facilities are required, in the X-ray department. Procedures include trigger point injections, epidurals, guanethedine, intercostal, paravertebral and other nerve blocks, root blocks, sympathetic blocks, medial nerve to facet joint injections, rhizotomies and epiduroplasties.

## **Pain Management Therapists**

The pain management therapy team can offer the approaches below:

- Pain Management Group Programme
- Physiotherapy
- Psychological therapy
- Acupuncture
- Alexander Technique teaching

## **Pain Management Group Programmes**

These are delivered by the multidisciplinary team after a careful assessment to ensure that it is the right course of action for the individual. We cover the following topics:

- Education to help understanding about pain and pain pathways
- Managing and pacing activities
- Improving confidence and communication
- Managing medication and flare-ups
- Understanding and managing thoughts and feelings
- Body dynamics and exercise
- A variety of relaxation and visualisation techniques
- Attention management and distraction techniques
- Plans to return to valued activities

**Alexander Technique Teaching**; Teaches patients how to optimise their posture and movement, and how to sustain these changes. Up to 8 individual sessions are offered.

**Acupuncture and TENS**: Our acupuncturist will offer each patient up to 6 sessions of acupuncture. He can also advise on how best to use TENS machines and training in the use of acupressure massage as a self-help technique.

**Specialist Physiotherapy Services:** Following comprehensive assessment of physical functioning, our specialist physiotherapists may offer active treatment but can more importantly also help to design an individual exercise plan that will encourage people to confidently and safely get back to increased activity levels.

**Psychological Services:** Many patients' first reaction to being referred to a psychologist is to worry that whoever referred them thinks that their physical pain is not real. However, pain is now widely acknowledged as being not only a physical experience, but also as having many emotional components, such as frustration, worry, anger or despair. A psychologist will focus on how patients living with pain make sense of their situation and the impact that this can have on their thoughts, feelings, behaviours and relationships.

Living with long-term pain can lead to patients feeling trapped in common negative cycles of pain, lack of activity, frustration and physical tension that actually seem to increase the pain. Psychologists can help patients to break these vicious cycles, by addressing such themes as confusion, loss, threat, change, altered future hopes and plans and by helping them to manage their fears, anger, guilt, blame, bitterness, self-criticism and hopelessness. Using primarily a cognitive-behavioural approach, psychologists work with patients so they can begin to think about changing things around and taking control of some aspects of their lives life once more.

**Information:** As chronic pain is often difficult to understand, many people find access to information and support very helpful. We have built up an extensive range of written information for people with chronic pain and their families, friends and employers, including a folder summarising the content of the Group Programme. We have a list of reliable, mainly UK based web sites providing resources for people with chronic pain.

**Back to work:** We encourage patients to return to work where possible and we have links with the local employment support teams.

#### **Some quotes from our patients:**

*"I gleaned so many things to help me deal with the pain"*

*"I feel more in control now".*

*"If it wasn't for coming to the pain clinic I would be another unemployment statistic by now"*

*"...this course – it would have given me more of a life years ago!"*

**How to contact us:**

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

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

**The Pain Clinic is located near the Coombe Road entrance to the Hospital.  
There are disabled parking bays next to the building.**

**Clinic staff:**

**Consultant anaesthetists with special interest in pain-**

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

**Acupuncturist**

James Treacher

**Alexander Technique Teacher**

Dee Fitzgerald

**Specialist Physiotherapists-**

Janet Briggs  
Amanda Clifford

**Clinical Psychologists-**

Dr. Ann Gold  
Ms Alison Lane  
Dr. Nicola Smart

**Administrative Support**

Polly Anderson  
Julia Williams  
Gill Gibbs