

## Expectations of group members

The aim of the PMP is to support you to develop skills to manage your pain independently. You will be asked to complete between session work which involves practising the new skills you have learned on the programme and working towards goals you have identified. It is important that you can attend all of the sessions on time to fully benefit from the programme.

## Who can attend the Knowsley PMP?

People with chronic pain who have a Knowsley GP can attend the Knowsley PMP. The PMP is for managing difficulties associated with pain. If you are experiencing other psychological difficulties, such as bereavement or PTSD you can ask your GP about other services. If we believe you have non-pain difficulties that would stop you from fully benefitting from the PMP we may direct you to other services before offering a PMP.

## How can I be referred?

You can be referred to the Knowsley PMP by speaking with your GP, physiotherapist, nurse specialist or consultant.

## How can I find out more?

You can contact the Clinical Psychology Department on **01744 646864** if you have any questions about the PMP.

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# Knowsley Pain Management Programme

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in alternative languages / formats on request.

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## Living with Chronic Pain

Living with chronic (long-term) pain can have a big impact on a person's quality of life. It can affect people in different ways and can be difficult to manage and cope with. Some difficulties people with chronic pain may experience include:

- **Being less able to do things** e.g. working, socialising, everyday activities, getting out, hobbies and exercise.
- **Difficult emotions** e.g. low mood, depression, anxiety, frustration, anger, guilt and shame.
- **Unhelpful thinking styles** e.g. focusing on what you cannot do and catastrophising (thinking of the worst outcome).
- **Impact on relationships** e.g. being more irritable with others, needing support from others, saying no to doing things for or with others and others expecting you to do things you may now struggle to do.

## What is the Knowsley Pain Management Programme (PMP)?

The Knowsley PMP is a group that aims to help people to develop new ways of managing difficulties related to chronic pain, and to improve their quality of life. The programme is not a cure for chronic pain. The aim is to help people move forward and enjoy life despite experiencing chronic pain.

## What does the PMP involve?

You will be invited to an assessment with one of the psychologists from the programme. This will last for approximately 1.5 hours and will be by telephone, video call or in the Clinical Psychology Department at St Helens Hospital. They will ask you about your pain and how you are currently coping. They will introduce you to some common 'vicious cycles' (traps) experienced by people with chronic pain. They will support you to identify a goal you can work towards to help you to exit a 'vicious cycle' which may be causing your pain to feel less manageable.

You will also be invited to a physiotherapy assessment to assess your suitability for the programme.

## The group programme

The PMP supports a small group (usually 10 or fewer) people experiencing chronic pain. It runs every Wednesday for 10 weeks. The programme is currently running online 1-3pm (due to the COVID-19 pandemic). When face-to-face groups resume it will be held at the Therapy Suite in Whiston Hospital (hours to be confirmed).

The first week is a chance to get to know each other, meet the psychology and physiotherapy staff who run the group and ask any questions. The other sessions cover managing thoughts, emotions, behaviours (such as exercise, diet, rest and pacing). We discuss communicating with others about how they can help you cope with your pain. We also teach you relaxation and mindfulness skills. There is a focus on pacing your activity and making gentle and gradual changes to improve your quality of life.

## Psychology:

Psychologists help you improve your quality of life by helping you recognise what is working well for you and what is not. We consider how 'vicious cycles' (of thoughts, emotions, body sensations and behaviours) may be taking you away from the life you want to lead. You will be encouraged to develop and practise strategies to create more helpful cycles to manage your pain so you can do more of what is important to you.

## Physiotherapy:

Physiotherapy focuses on helping you understand more about pain in order to reduce its impact. Sessions focus on strategies for managing daily activities. Adapted exercise routines to help you benefit from exercising in the midst of chronic pain. The aim is to increase your confidence and ability to exercise and gradually increase your activity levels, without causing a flare-up. We aim to help you improve your fitness and general wellbeing to help you to maintain your independence and quality of life.

Each session will involve education, discussion, exercise, relaxation and goal-setting.