

Chronic pain can be difficult to treat and as there is often no cure, treatment may be focused on helping you to manage pain more effectively. Your Pain Consultant will talk to you about which treatments might be suitable for you.

Your doctor may recommend one or more of the following types of treatment:

- Advice on ways to cope with pain
- Physiotherapy specialising in Pain Management
- Psychological treatments chosen for managing chronic pain
- Pain Management Group
- Pain relief medication
- Targeted injections
- Referral for exercise
- Acupuncture
- TENS – a type of pain relief using mild electrical currents

These are all available at The Whittington Hospital, and together we will agree a treatment plan, and a follow-up appointment at The Pain Clinic may be arranged to review your progress.

You may be asked to repeat the questionnaires at this follow-up.

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## The Chronic Pain Management Service

### A patient's guide



## **The Pain Clinic**

This leaflet is to outline the Chronic Pain Management Service at The Whittington Hospital. You may have been referred to this service by your GP, or by a hospital doctor, because of chronic (long-term) pain.

This leaflet tells you what to expect when you attend the Pain Clinic.

### **What is chronic pain?**

Chronic pain is a term used to describe pain that lasts for longer than three months. It can be anywhere in the body, and it may be constant or it may come and go.

People who live with chronic pain may find it stressful. It can interfere with many areas of daily life, including work, social life, mood and relationships with family or friends.

Often the reason why chronic pain develops is unknown, but in some cases it is related to an injury or a long-term condition. We understand that the pain you experience is real.

Although pain may not always be curable, we can work with you to find ways to relieve pain where possible, and help you improve your quality of life.

### **Who is in the Pain Team?**

It is a multidisciplinary team, which includes doctors (anaesthetists with specialist training in pain management), physiotherapists and psychologists.

### **What happens in the Pain Clinic?**

You will first be invited to attend an appointment to see the pain consultant. This may last up to an hour. During the appointment the doctor may:

- Ask you to fill in some questionnaires about your pain and your general well being. These help us to understand more about its effects on your emotions and your quality of life. The questionnaires are voluntary and confidential.
- Talk to you and ask questions about your symptoms and about treatments you have had in the past.

- Examine you
- Arrange for you to have some tests if necessary
- Discuss ways of treating the pain

This information helps us to discuss treatment most suited to your needs, and assess your progress throughout treatment.

There will also be time for you to ask any questions you may have.

It would be helpful if you can arrive early for your appointment to allow time for the questionnaires, and please bring with you

- A list of your medications
- Results of any investigations you may have had outside of The Whittington Hospital
- Relevant letters
- Your spectacles, if required

### **What treatments are available?**

The aim of the treatment is to help improve your quality of life.