

# Chronic Pain

## Dealing with long term pain

Education Programmes for Patients (EPP) Cymru deliver FREE Health and Well Being courses for adults across Wales



## Chronic Pain

The Chronic Pain Self Management course was developed for people who have a primary or secondary diagnosis of chronic pain. Pain is defined as being chronic or long term when it lasts for longer than 3 to 6 months, or beyond the normal healing time of an injury.

**Examples of Chronic Pain conditions are:** musculo-skeletal pain, such as neck, shoulder or back pain. Fibromyalgia, whiplash injuries, chronic regional pain syndromes, repetitive strain injury, chronic pelvic pain, post-surgical pain that lasts beyond 6 months, neuropathic pain, post stroke or central pain.

The Chronic Pain Self Management course may also benefit those who have conditions such as persistent headache, Crohn's disease, irritable bowel syndrome, diabetic neuropathy, or those who experience severe muscular pain due to conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

### Topics covered include:

- 1 **ways to deal with problems** such as restricted movement, fatigue, pacing and planning and tense muscles.
- 2 **exercise for staying healthy, flexible, and strong**
- 3 **making decisions** about treatment and complementary therapies
- 4 **ways to talk about chronic pain** with family, friends, and health professionals
- 5 **healthy eating**
- 6 **setting goals**
- 7 **relationships**

### Does the Programme replace existing programmes and treatments?

The Self Management Programme will not conflict with existing programmes or treatment. It is designed to enhance regular treatment. The programme gives participants the skills to coordinate all the things needed to manage their health, as well as to help them keep active in their lives.

### How was the Programme developed and evaluated?

Like the other Self Management Resource Centre Self Management programmes, the Chronic Pain Programme has also been rigorously evaluated in two randomised clinical trials funded by Health Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). The research studies found that, on average, people who have participated in the Chronic Pain Programme have more vitality or energy, less pain, less dependence on others, improved mental health, are more involved in everyday activities, and are more satisfied with their lives compared to those who have not taken the programme.

Each person who attends will receive a copy of the book, Living a Healthy Life With Chronic Pain (on loan for the 6 weeks), and a relaxation CD, **Relaxation for Mind and Body**, to keep.

It is the way in which the programme is run that makes it effective. Through group discussions, mutual support and learning and practicing new techniques, participants will finish the course with more confidence in their ability to manage their own health and maintain active and full lives.