

STOP!

CHRONIC BACK PAIN

Self-management and Timely intervention – an Opportunity for the Prevention of Chronic Back Pain

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Context

The Dorset Pain Management Unit offers Pain Management Programmes (PMPs) to people with chronic pain. This project aims to deliver multidisciplinary PMPs across three different settings to people earlier in their pain journey to prevent chronicity.

Problem

When patients wait years for pain management, chronicity becomes entrenched, increasing dependence on healthcare services and making self-management difficult.

Assessment of problem and analysis of its causes

Because chronic pain treatments in UK are offered in linear sequence, people have to wait 3 years for diagnosis and at least 3 more years for adequate management, twice as long as in other European countries. Every year, 3.3 million people in UK suffering from first episode back pain do not recover adding to the cost of £1 billion p.a. to the NHS. The cost to individuals is equally high as invalidism leads to loss of occupation, quality of life and mental health.

Strategy for change

Service users, clinicians, managers, researchers and commissioners collaborated to deliver the early intervention PMPs in three areas over one year. Feedback from cohorts was used to make improvements.

Discussion with commissioners is ongoing to expand this new service.

Measurement of improvement

- Roland & Morris disability questionnaire
- Pain catastrophising scale
- Hospital anxiety and depression scale
- Satisfaction questionnaires
- Telephone interviews
- Euroqol 5D
- Your Use of Health and Social Services (YUHASS) questionnaire

Effects of changes

All cohorts showed improvements in several areas.

Feedback indicated that the programme was rated very highly, content was extremely relevant. Clinical outcomes include reduced reliance on medication, improved mental health, self-reliance and confidence, return to work, through improved use of pacing, relaxation and enhanced physical fitness.

Communication with Pain Services commissioners aims to change the delivery of pain services from traditional PMPs to early intervention as a primary strategy to enhance self management and reduce the need for later input.

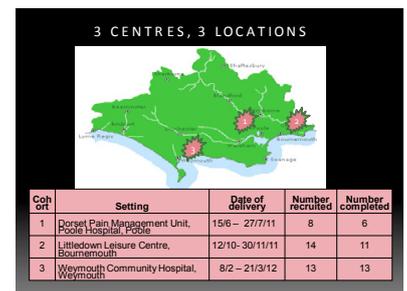
Lessons learnt

People whose acute back pain doesn't improve with physical therapy offered as per NICE guidelines often seek treatment outside the NHS and are therefore hard to recruit for early intervention. People with longer duration of illness are more willing to adopt the message of pain management. Weekly attendance at PMP is difficult for people during the acute phase as they may still be employed and more accessible programmes need to be offered. Service users as Pain Chain coaches and appropriate social media involvement have proved invaluable in supporting the therapeutic process.

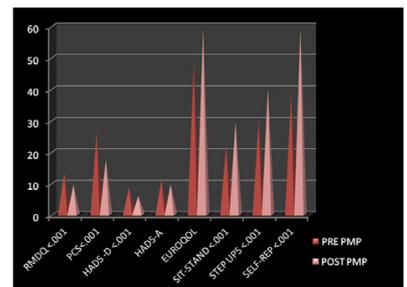
Message for others

Self-management and timely intervention provide an opportunity to prevent chronic back pain. Resources should be deployed between chronic and acute services to prevent future pain sufferers developing chronicity.

Tiers of support work well and are realistic to deliver. Peer support helped facilitate credible change. Joined up thinking between commissioners, service providers and users helped design and deliver this excellent service, dedicated to those who need it most.



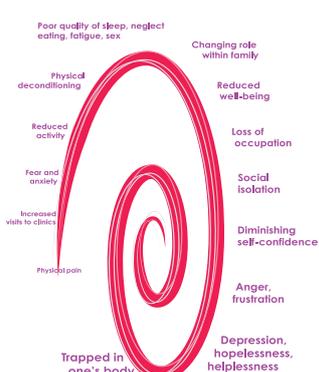
Outcome Measure	Pre-intervention mean (SD)	Post-intervention mean (SD)	Difference in score	p-value
RMDQ - Disability	13.3 (6.1)	9.5 (5.4)	-3.8	<.001
PCS - Catastrophising	26.1 (10.0)	17.5 (10.1)	-8.6	<.001
HADS - Depression	8.7 (3.4)	5.9 (4.4)	-2.7	<.001
HADS - Anxiety	10.9 (4.1)	9.6 (4.6)	-1.3	.058
Euroqol - Quality of life	48.2 (21.1)	59.0 (21.1)	10.8	.002
Physiotherapy - Sit-to-stand	22.2 (14.5)	29.6 (18.7)	7.4	<.001
Physiotherapy - Step-ups	30.0 (15.3)	40.3 (23.8)	10.3	<.001
Self-reported change -%	38.2 (19.3)	59.0 (25.3)	20.8	<.001



Components of PMP



Downward spiral of chronic pain



Web support



Participant Feedback:

"I feel better in myself as I have reduced my medication as a result of the programme..."

"The Pain Chain was fantastic... pain coach lovely and welcoming..."

"Thank you for finding me and for teaching me..."