



## STEPS One Day Pain Management Workshop

This evidence guided early intervention is an essential component of first line pain management. Research has consistently shown that this 'best practice' approach to pain management, where the patient is educated and involved in early interventional strategies, leads to improved functional abilities.

The workshop uses interactive small group learning involving up to 12 participants. It comprises of six individual sessions, led by psychologists, a pain counsellor, an exercise therapist, a physiotherapist and a pain medicine physician.

### **Session one – Orientation and core concept**

Familiarises patients with the importance of pain-related self-management. It contains fundamental messages about active personal engagement, the benefits of using a multi-disciplinary approach, i.e. using three evidence based strategies achieves better outcomes than using just one. The aim of this session is to expose common misconceptions that could be barriers to patients' therapeutic engagement, such as on-going pain does not mean more damage.

### **Session two – pacing**

Provides instruction on how to perform routine daily activities in a time-contingent rather than pain-contingent manner and thereby improve function in a sustainable way. A structure is provided for the forward planning of activities.

### **Session three – patient stories**

Participants are asked to share their personal experiences of coping with persistent pain. This helps to move focus away from drawbacks and restrictions towards viewing life in a positive frame that is solution focused. The aim of this session is to increase the likelihood of workshop learnt techniques and strategies being deployed.

### **Session four – moving with pain**

Introduces basic neurophysiological education as it relates to pain, muscular function and sensorimotor retraining. Provides instructions on appropriate physical activities that may assist patients to reach their goals. Reinforces pacing principles in an applied context.

### **Session five – response to pain**

Information is provided on ways to improve mood and coping capacity. Provides tuition in learning to use relaxation in the moment coupled with acceptance, rather than avoidance of pain throughout daily activities. Mindfulness skills and threat exposure combined with relaxation in the moment are utilised to change experience of pain.



**Session 6 – sense-making for people in pain**

Session led by pain medicine physician and includes additional neurophysiology education, concepts of measuring expected outcomes of pharmacological and invasive interventions, information about medication. Discussion to make sense of the persistent pain experience and its management in a context of limited efficacy of medical treatment alone.

Each session is structured but open interaction is encouraged. A combination of teaching aids are utilised, and a workshop manual and relaxation cd are given to participants. Morning and Afternoon tea and lunch are provided.