

**Newsletter Supplement
Pain Self-Management—First Choice or last Resort?***

Persistent Pain - Did you know?

- Persistent pain (previously known as chronic pain) is pain that continues for three months or more and may not respond to standard medical treatment. In persistent pain, changes are triggered in the spinal cord and brain, which may explain why medication has limited benefit¹.
 - Medicines play only one part in managing persistent pain. People should not expect complete pain relief from medication alone. Achieving a 30% pain reduction from medication is considered a good outcome for most people.
 - Being a good self-manager helps people to cope with their pain on a daily basis and have an improved quality of life. This may also lead to a reduced reliance on medication and, a reduction in associated risks and side-effects.
- There are many resources available to support people with pain self-management, for example, 'The Pain Toolkit' (www.paintoolkit.org) and the 'Live Well With Pain' website (<http://livewellwithpain.co.uk/>)**



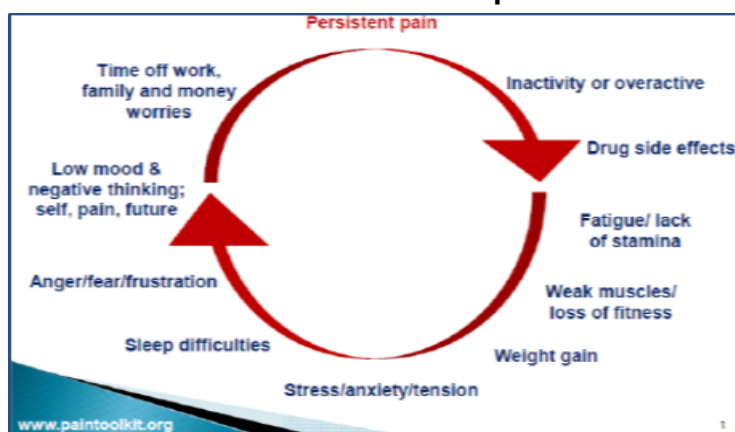
1. Expect analgesic failure; pursue analgesic success. Moore A et al. BMJ 2013; 346:bmj.f2690. <http://www.bmj.com/content/346/bmj.f2690>

The Pain Toolkit booklet

The Pain Toolkit booklet illustrates 12 simple tools or skills which can help people to self-manage their pain.

- Tool 1** - Accept that you have persistent pain...and then begin to move on
- Tool 2** - Get involved -building a support team
- Tool 3** - Pacing
- Tool 4** - Learn to prioritise and plan out your days
- Tool 5** - Setting Goals/Action Plans
- Tool 6** - Being patient with yourself
- Tool 7** - Learn relaxation skills
- Tool 8** - Stretching & Exercise
- Tool 9** - Keep a diary and track your progress
- Tool 10** - Have a set-back plan
- Tool 11** - Team Work
- Tool 12** - is keeping it up... putting into daily practice the tools from 1-11.

The Pain Toolkit also explains the Pain Cycle and factors that can influence pain levels.



How do I obtain supplies of Pain Toolkit booklets?

GP Practices and Community Pharmacies
Pain Toolkit booklets can be ordered free of charge (normal value £4 per booklet) by emailing details to: pharmacystationeryorders@hscni.net
If volumes greater than 25 are required, please contact your Pharmacy Adviser in the first instance.

'Live Well With Pain' website

The 'Live Well with Pain' website has been developed **by clinicians, for clinicians** to help support people with persistent pain towards better self-management of their long-term pain. The website is free to use, and is full of techniques and

resources that GPs and pain specialists have found useful over many years. The resources will help to increase the skills and confidence of those working with people who live with persistent pain. (<http://livewellwithpain.co.uk/> see over for further details).

Action: GP Practices and Community Pharmacies

⇒ Pain self-management skills should be discussed/reinforced at every opportunity utilising available resources, e.g. Pain Toolkit, Live Well with Pain website.

*This bulletin applies to persistent non-malignant pain.

'Live Well With Pain' website

<http://livewellwithpain.co.uk/>

The 'Live Well With Pain' website focuses on providing advice and resources to help practitioners to:

- Increase their confidence in working with people with persistent pain
- Develop new skills for 'shifting the conversation' towards self management
- Support patients to form person-centred goals
- Gain new techniques for building patients' self management skills
- Provide patients with practical self management tools
- Be better able to support patients on their self care journey

LiveWell
withpain

About Resources Keep in touch Contact

The '[Resources for Clinicians](#)' area is organised around the following key themes:

Shifting the conversation



This section includes suggested and demonstrated skills and tools to help shift the conversation from 'fixing pain to managing pain well'. For example, helping patients to break the 'Pain Cycle' by using the 'Self – Management cycle'.



Supporting self management



This section includes useful tips for explaining the importance of self-management skills. For example, a GP with expertise in this area discusses this by video. Posters can also be downloaded from here for use in your practice/pharmacy.

Medicines and your patient



This section includes practical resources to help ensure patients are making effective use of medication, especially opioids. For example, useful ideas for where to start if people on opioids, particularly high doses and those still reporting pain.

The '[Resources for Patients](#)' section includes information, worksheets and video resources for practitioners to discuss and share with patients. They are designed to help patients:

- become fitter and active
- understand more about their pain and the brain
- get the best out their medication (and understand when to reduce or stop its use)
- find new ways so that they can sleep better, and manage their moods more effectively
- and therefore **Live Well with Pain**



Produced by the HSCB Pharmacy and Medicines Management Team.

If you require further information please contact one of the Pharmacy Advisers in your local HSCB office.