

Topics covered in the programme

What is covered in the programme?

- Understanding pain
- Goal setting
- Pacing activities
- Relaxation
- Using pain medications
- Improving sleep
- Limits of x-ray / MRI
- Thoughts and feelings
- Tissue healing
- Flare ups & set backs
- Benefits of exercise
- Making and maintaining changes

How can I be referred?

- We will accept referrals from external agencies and professionals (eg. GPs, specialists, psychologists) whom are working with people with persistent pain or potential participants can contact us directly.
- The Persistent Pain Service may have recommended the PEP as an option to someone who has been assessed by the service.



Contact us

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TARANAKI
District Health Board

Taranaki DHB
Persistent Pain Service

PEP Pain Education Programme



Taranaki Together, a Healthy Community
Taranaki Whānui He Rohe Oranga



Introduction

Difficult persisting (chronic) pain problems need to be tackled from more than just one angle. In Taranaki, we have developed a pain education programme called PEP to help people with persistent pain.

This programme is aimed at:

- People who have experienced pain for a period of three months or longer
- Those who are working or studying and are unable to attend our more intensive PUEA programme.
- People who are *not* severely disabled or distressed by their pain condition.

What is persistent pain?

We often think we know what other people's pain is like, yet pain can have very different meanings to different individuals. Persistent pain refers to any pain continuing for more than three to six months.

When someone has a pain that does not get better, the assumption might be that the pain is continuing because the degree of injury or damage is particularly bad. We know that in persistent pain it is not that simple.

When the pain has gone on for a long time, there are always other factors affecting it other than the original injury or cause. As the person does less because of the pain, there may be secondary problems in muscles and joints causing alterations to fitness, flexibility or posture.

As other parts of life become affected, such as work, relationships and family activities, more psychological factors may become significant, such as fears about the severity or cause of the pain, or depression. These can all add up to influencing the processing of pain messages by the nervous system.

Very often a vicious circle develops with all of these changes adding up to worsen the difficulties experienced by the sufferer. The more they hurt, the less they can do, the less they do, the less fit they become and the less they are able to enjoy the pleasurable things in life. They may be troubled by the side effects of tablets and poor sleep thus worsening their mood.

All too often routine treatments don't cure the pain or there can be hassles in dealing with the system, leading to more frustration and disappointment. This worsens matters further and leads to a sense of hopelessness and helplessness as the person asks themselves "will it always be like this?" and "is there nothing that can be done?"

This is where pain education comes in.

What can you do about persistent pain?

PEP offers a different type of approach to managing pain. We accept that you have a persistent pain problem. However, our focus is helping you to find ways out of the vicious cycles and traps that you may find you have become caught up in as a result of your pain.

PEP is a group education programme that aims to provide evidence based information about managing persistent pain.

It is a short term programme that allows participants to attend all or some of the sessions.

Our team consists of physiotherapists, doctors, psychologists, occupational therapists and a pain educator.

The programme

- PEP generally runs twice a year at Taranaki Base Hospital on Tuesdays 12 noon - 2pm.
- In total there are five sessions offered each term, of two hours duration each session.