

NHS West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group

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Press release

Bringing relief to chronic pain sufferers

The introduction of a new community-based chronic pain management service in west Suffolk is set to deliver better care and support to patients.

The service, which will begin in April 2015, is being funded by the NHS West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group (WSCCG) and delivered by the local Suffolk GP Federation.

Chronic pain is a persistent pain which lasts longer than three months and could arise from an injury or illness or there can be no clear cause. It is estimated that in the UK five million people develop chronic pain each year and only two-thirds recover. There are around 14 million people who live with chronic pain and most recent figures estimate that chronic pain accounts for 4.6 million GP appointments annually.

Dr Rakesh Raja, a GP in Sudbury who is leading the introduction of the new service for the WSCCG said: "The introduction of this community based service recognises that there is a need for additional help and support for patients. Chronic pain can have devastating consequences, leaving a patient unable to function normally. A chronic pain sufferer could be left constantly fatigued by being unable to sleep properly, be unable to play with their child because of limited movement or even be unable to hold down a job.

"This is very much an integrated service, meaning our health and care partners along with voluntary organisations will be working with patients, depending on the type of help and support they need. This could be accessing healthy living services to increase activity or cut down on smoking or drinking. Some patients may benefit from physiotherapy treatment or access to mental health or occupational health services.

"Patients will be involved with every step of the process with the aim that they are empowered to know how they can better self-manage their own condition, reduce the reliance on medication and the number of medical interventions required.

"Healthcare professionals will also benefit from the new service, with additional advice and guidance to help them appropriately diagnose chronic pain and help

patients with pain to manage their condition.”

Patients will be referred to the service by their GP, physiotherapist or hospital.

Dr Crispin Dunne, Suffolk GP Federation Board director and a GP in Bury St Edmunds, said: “The GP Federation being chosen as the provider is a testament to the confidence the WSCCG has in the ability of our members to deliver a quality service. Being a local, GP led, community organisation, we know just how much distress can be caused by chronic pain.

“We will work with our health and social care partners to ensure this new service is the very best it can be and that it delivers real improvement to the lives of patients in west Suffolk who live with chronic pain.”

Issued by The Communications Team on 01473 770014

For more information about the West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group visit www.westsuffolkccg.nhs.uk