WEST SUFFOLK PAIN MANAGEMENT SERVICE

Following discussions with you, your health care professional is referring you to the West Suffolk Pain Management Service.

People referred to this service have been experiencing pain for longer than 3 months that hasn’t responded to usual medical treatments. This is known as persistent pain (sometimes also referred to as chronic or long term pain). It can be disabling and frustrating for many people to manage. It can also affect relationships with family, friends and work colleagues.

You are not alone, there are approximately 28 million people in the UK that have persistent pain¹. For many people there is not a cure for persistent pain, however there are many things that you can do to help self-manage your pain, take back control and improve your quality of life. This is where pain management services can help.

What is the West Suffolk Pain Management Service?

The service is made up of healthcare professionals who specialise in the management of persistent pain, these are consultants, senior clinical nurse specialists, specialist physiotherapists and a clinical psychologist. The service operates from venues both within the community, such as Drover’s House in Bury St Edmunds, and also the pain clinic at West Suffolk Hospital. Not everyone is seen at the hospital, indeed most people are seen and the majority of appointments take place within the community.

What happens at the West Suffolk Pain Management Service?

Everyone referred to the service is seen for an initial assessment individually with an appropriate member of the health care professional team. This appointment is approximately 60 minutes long and enables us to understand more about your pain and how it affects you and your life.

Shared decision making is at the centre of all we offer. Following your initial assessment, you will be invited to attend a session called Next Steps. You will be introduced to all the education and therapies we offer and can then decide what sessions are right for you. We believe that you are the expert of you and your pain.

Evidence shows that the more people are actively involved in the management of their long term condition, which includes persistent pain, the better their health outcomes and quality of life. Therefore the main focus of the service is on teaching, guiding and supporting you to understand more about persistent pain, to learn strategies and gain skills to self-manage your pain and improve your quality of life.

Medication can play a small part in the management of persistent pain so the service provides education and advice on pain medications too. This includes the current evidence from research about opiate medications, these are not recommended for persistent pain. The service delivers education to better inform you about this and support to reduce these medications is also an option available.

What if I’m not interested in what is being offered by the West Suffolk Pain Management Service?

If having thought about things or reading this leaflet you feel that this service is not for you, when you are contacted to make your initial appointment you can decline. Equally if after your initial appointment you do not wish to continue with the service just let us know.

There are no compulsory sessions you have to attend within the service as the aim is to work with you in partnership, empowering you to self-manage your pain. We make no judgement on people who are not ready to engage with the service and your referral will be returned to your doctor who will continue to support you.

Here are some links to further information and support about persistent pain you might find useful:

Understanding pain and what to do about it in less than 5 minutes - You Tube video for patients.  
www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWMKucuejls

Pain Toolkit. Simple guide that provides some handy tips and skills to help patients understand and manage their pain better. Available in hard copy, app, and an animated video Website contains useful links www.paintoolkit.org/

Retrain Pain - free course. 5 short modules which provide a scientific approach to understanding persistent pain and introduction to some pain management strategies. www.retrainpain.org/

Explaining Pain. Understanding more about your persistent pain and how it affects your life.  
www.livewellwithpain.co.uk/resources-for-your-patients/information-and-worksheets/explaining-pain

Local Organisations:

- Allied Health Professionals: www.ahpsuffolk.co.uk/ or tel. 03330433966
- Healthy walks or exercise on referral: Jackie.chubb@acleisure.com or 01284 757481
- West Suffolk Chronic Pain Support Group: www.chronicpainsupportgroup.co.uk or tel. 07724 187774
- Bury St Edmunds Fibromyalgia Support: https://en-gb.facebook.com/fibrobse/
- Suffolk Carers: www.suffolk-carers.org.uk/ or telephone 01473 835477
- Suffolk Wellbeing Service: www.wellbeingnands.co.uk or tel. 0300 123 1503
- One Life Suffolk: www.onelifesuffolk.co.uk or tel. 01473 718193
- Turning Point: www.turning-point.co.uk or tel. 01284 766554