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# Back Pain Management Programme

## Client information sheet

### The aim of the programme

The programme aims to reduce the disability and distress caused by your chronic pain and to improve your quality of life. These aims are achieved by teaching physical, psychological and practical techniques which will help you cope better with the pain and equip you to improve your level of function. By continuing to apply all you will have learnt on the programme and working towards specific goals that you will define, you will learn to be in control of your pain. There is no 'hands on' physical treatment during the programme. The programme does not aim to 'cure the pain'.

### The pre-assessment appointment

Before being given a start date for the programme you will have an appointment with the therapists to ensure that the programme is suitable for you. At this time we may feel that another approach is more suitable or that you are not ready for the programme. Therefore **you may not be accepted** onto the programme. **If, for any reason, you believe that the programme is not suitable for you please liaise with your consultant and cancel you pre-assessment appointment if already booked.**

**If you cannot attend a pre-assessment appointment for any reason, please contact clinic 5 on, 01223 216217, to cancel/reschedule the appointment. Please note that if you do not attend your appointment without informing clinic 5 then you will be automatically discharged back to the consultant and will need to be re-referred, which can result in a significant wait.**

### The programme

The programme is run on an outpatient scheme for three weeks, Monday to Thursday (09:30 – 15:30). You will either come in from home on a daily basis or accommodation will be provided. The hospital pays for the cost of the accommodation. Throughout the programme you will work in a group, and will be encouraged to participate as fully as possible in order to achieve the most out of the course. You may experience increased pain during the programme due to a change in your daily routine. However, the therapists and the head consultant will be able to guide you through this. Food is not provided for patients on the programme, however, you are welcome to bring your own packed lunch or use any of the convenience stores or food outlets.

## **Friends and family day**

There is an open day when you can bring a relative or friend. This is usually on the first Monday of week three of the programme. It will give them an opportunity to discuss your goals, to gain insight into the programme, and enable them to help provide support to you in the changes you have made in your lifestyle. This day will be cancelled if we do not have more than two patients getting their companions to attend. Please liaise with the therapists on the day of your pre-assessment to get a date for this day which will enable you and your companion to book off time in advance.

## **Medication**

You are expected to bring any medication you are taking with you. This will be reviewed at the weekly ward round and altered if necessary.

## **Therapy sessions**

These sessions will be led by a physiotherapist, occupational therapist, nurse psychological therapist, dietician and a pain clinic nurse. During these sessions you will work on understanding the anatomy and function in the back and identify how your back problem affects your lifestyle. You will be taught the principles of how to set appropriate goals to improve your lifestyle, and how to pace yourself during activities in order to maximise your ability. You will have the opportunity to apply back care principles into tasks that you find difficult. Also, you can try out back cushions and relaxation resources that might help you.

## **Exercise sessions**

You will also be taught the principles of exercise, which, with the help of the physiotherapists, will help you to design and progress your own exercise regime. This is aimed at increasing your fitness and in turn physical function.

## **Hydrotherapy**

On a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, the day will end with an exercise session in a small heated pool. It is not necessary to be able to swim in order to benefit from this. Don't forget to bring a swimming costume!

## **At the end of the programme**

You should be confident that you have developed a new approach to managing your back pain which you can continue to apply at home. You will have a follow up appointment with the therapy staff after one month, another with the Consultant and therapy staff after six months and again with the therapy staff at one year after the programme.

**If you have any further queries you can contact the staff concerned in the Physiotherapy Department on 01223 216633.**