

CONTEXT AND SCOPE OF THE NSW OACCP

The OACCP will support the development, implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive, multidisciplinary treatment program for OA. The model provides for care within a chronic disease management model, rather than single practitioner, episodic care. This addresses the fact that, while pathways for specific treatments for OA such as elective joint replacement have been developed, a comprehensive pathway of conservative, inter-disciplinary management has been lacking.

Essential to this model are methods which incorporate best practice physical and psychosocial management, and strategies to encourage collaboration and communication between health providers across disciplines and settings. The improved involvement and communication between health care practitioners participating in this multidisciplinary model has been shown to improve individual disease management and outcome [1, 2].

The chronic care approach will require concerted collaboration between all stakeholders and their respective professional societies. These include individuals with OA and their carers, family and friends, consumer advocacy groups such as Arthritis NSW, Local Health Districts (LHDs) and their Boards and Clinical Councils, allied health professionals, nurses, general practitioners (GPs) in primary care, specialist medical practitioners, and the professional bodies to which these health practitioners belong.

The following resources were referred to in developing this document:

- National Action Plan for Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid Arthritis and Osteoporosis [3]
- National Health Priority Action Council National Service Improvement Framework for Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid Arthritis and Osteoporosis 2006 [4]
- National Health Priority Action Council National Chronic Disease Strategy 2006 [5]
- Royal Australasian College of General Practitioners guideline for the non-surgical management of hip and knee osteoarthritis 2009 [6]
- Conservative OA management guidelines from international groups including the Osteoarthritis Research Society International [7-9]
- NSW Department of Health NSW Chronic Care Program: Rehabilitation for Chronic Disease Volume 1, 2006 and Implementing - Volume 2, 2006 [10]

The program will specifically target those people in NSW with a diagnosis of OA, who have modifiable risk factors for OA progression, such as obesity and poor muscle strength and control, and who would benefit from additional support of their self-management strategies. During the pilot phase of the program, most participants will be drawn from the elective joint replacement waiting lists at each of the pilot sites.