# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACI Pain Network**

Jenni Johnson  
Network Manager

With Acknowledgements to:  
Fiona Hodson  
CNC Hunter Integrated pain Service  
Project officer ACI Pain Network  
Lyndall Katte  
Research officer  
Project officer ACI Pain network
Background

Pain is defined by the International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) as “an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience, associated with actual or potential tissue damage, or described in terms of such damage”. Chronic pain is defined as pain lasting longer than 6 months duration and often leads to high levels of distress and disability.

In November 2012, The NSW Minister for Health, The Honourable Jillian Skinner, provided unprecedented funding in NSW to improve chronic pain services provided through public hospitals. The aim of this funding injection was to address the aspects of importance identified in the National Pain Strategy 2010. One of the issues identified in both documents is lack of availability, and access to specialist services, highlighted by long waiting lists. The resulting impact on GPs and the community, where the majority of chronic pain is managed, is significant. In particular, the issue of rising opiate misuse in the community, and the associated burden on the economy of the state, is an issue of concern at all levels.

Of critical importance in the pain plan, and underpinning much of the funding arrangement was the need to better support the primary care sector in managing patients with chronic pain;

In 2013, the ACI Pain network developed a website based on extensive consumer and clinician consultation. Over 400 clinicians were consulted via survey monkey, focus group and interview. (See appendix 1) Over 100 consumers were consulted through focus group and survey. (See appendix 2). The website was launched in March 2014. In October 2014, an additional module on spinal cord injury and chronic pain was developed which has been separately analysed (see appendix 3)

Four components of the website were developed

- A consumer section targeting adults with chronic pain
- An interactive consumer section targeting adolescents with chronic pain
- A health professionals toolkit containing assessment and management resources
- A module for Spinal Cord Injury and Chronic Pain

Purpose

The purpose of developing the website was to provide freely available, evidence based and accessible information enabling people living with chronic pain to understand their condition
and take steps to manage it. In addition, the aim was to provide clinicians with point of care support to apply an evidence based approach to managing chronic pain. This approach provides a platform for the patient and clinician to work in a partnership to achieve identified goals and regain confidence in managing pain within the limitations of an internet platform and literacy capability.

The evaluation has a number of objectives as follows:

**Objective 1:** To distribute the website widely achieving high and broad sector utilisation

**Objective 2:** To provide easy access and useful information for consumers that is capable of prompting improved understanding of how to manage pain and inspiring behaviour change; i.e. the consumer adopts new strategies or changes the way in which they cope with pain

**Objective 3:** to promote clinician understanding and uptake of the materials

### Methodology

Planning & key phases of the project were:

- Stakeholder engagement
- Needs analysis of key stakeholders
- Development of resource and website
- Dissemination and distribution
- Project evaluation

Significant consultation with representation from consumers, primary care and tertiary care sector has informed the development of the ‘NSW ACI Pain Toolkit’ and Pain website over the last year. (See appendix 1, 2)

**Objective 1:** To distribute widely achieving high and broad sector utilisation

**Methodology:**

The website was launched in March 2014 by the Minister for Health at the NSW State Library. Prior to the launch, extensive partnerships were fostered with clinical consumer and community groups including schools, retirement sector, pharmacies, Medicare Locals, Local health Districts (LHDs) and NSW State Libraries. Extensive promotion and education was undertaken and continues through all of these agencies.

**Objective 2:** To provide easy access and useful information for consumers that is capable of prompting improved understanding of how to manage pain and inspiring behaviour change; i.e. the consumer will adopt new strategies or changes the way in which they cope with pain. Adoption of physical strategies, diet and lifestyle strategies and utilisation of psychological strategies are all important
Methodology:
Consumers were involved in every aspect of the development from design, through to production and road testing of the materials. The Needs Analysis report (see Appendix 2) highlights the issues that consumers identified as elements critical to profile on the website. Particularly, the message of hope and availability of support are embedded through all of the consumer information.

Objective 3: to promote clinician understanding and uptake of the materials
Of critical importance in the pain plan, and underpinning much of the funding arrangement was the need to better support the primary care sector in managing patients with chronic pain; specifically in early recognition and intervention, management, cross referral to allied health, and access to expertise.

Methodology:
Extensive education was conducted across NSW for all clinical disciplines. Full and half day forums promoting the website and management approaches have been conducted in partnership with the LHDs.

Results

Objective 1: To distribute widely achieving high and broad sector utilisation

Distribution and promotion of the materials
All partnerships with health, community and NGO groups were utilised to promote the website including international organisations

Non-Government Agencies
- Chronic Pain Australia (CPA)
- Pain Australia (PA)
- Australian Medicare Local Alliance (AMLA)
- Community Pharmacists
- Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA)
- Pharmacy Guild of Australia-NSW Branch
- Professional colleges and organisations
- National Prescribing Service

Government agencies
- 100% of Medicare Locals have been working with ACI to distribute the materials and provide educational opportunities to promote the website
LHDs
NSW State Library
NSW Health- Pharmaceutical Branch Services (PBS) and Therapeutic Advisory Group
National Prescribing Service
NSW Therapeutic Advisory Group
NSW Pharmaceutical Branch
Schools
Retirement Villages
Veterans

Professional Organisations

- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
- Australian Physiotherapists Association
- Australian Psychological Society
- Australian Occupational therapy Association
- Australian Practice Nurses Association
- GP NSW

Google analytics are regularly reviewed for activity levels. Up till the end of July 2015, the site had received in excess of 269,000 page views. The average time per visit is between 6 and 9 minutes indicating that participants are staying online long enough to view a film or review resources. Between 5 and 6 pages are viewed at each session indicating a willingness to browse and remain engaged with the resources. Over half of the visitors to the site are returning for subsequent visits indicating usefulness of the materials. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1

![Audience Overview](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Pageviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Pain</td>
<td>55,699</td>
<td>33,761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Pain</td>
<td>214,097</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages / Session</th>
<th>Avg. Session Duration</th>
<th>Bounce Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Pain</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>00:04:49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Pain</td>
<td>43.00%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% New Sessions
Chronic Pain 55.60%
133 countries have accessed the site including Japan, the United States and the United Kingdom. There is also broad national use. The range of audience is extensive and includes pain clinicians, primary care clinicians, adolescents, physiotherapists, practice nurses, psychologists, case managers and adults from all age groups.

When asked what they liked about the website, patients said

- “I have lived with chronic pain of arthritis for many years. I now live in a wheelchair in a nursing home. All I was ever offered was /is pain killers. Tramadol 100x2. This website has been a revelation to me”

- I love it. It is so wonderful to have a site like this in Australia. As a 24 year old with chronic pain I thank you from the bottom of my heart!!

- Excellent work! CPS Foundation US will definitely aim new members here!

- I really like the video transcriptions, I can write down what I need and don’t have to scroll back through or restart the video

**Website utilisation**

- 269 000 page views
- 5-7 pages per session
- 6 minutes up till 9 minutes per session
- 50% repeat visits
- 2847 health plans downloaded

**Objective 2:** To provide easy access and useful information for consumers that is capable of prompting improved understanding of how to manage pain and inspire behaviour change

Google analytics are reviewed regularly to monitor activity on the website. In July 2015, 94 % of people surveyed would recommend the website (For Everyone section) to others. (Figure 2)
70% report of respondents report changing something about the way that they cope with pain as a result of viewing the website. (Figure 3)

The average rating for usefulness of the whole site was 7/10

**Patient quotes include:**

“I found it very easy to navigate”

“I love the video explaining the gateways in the brain. I have read about it but seeing it visually helped me understand it. Your site has lifted my spirits and given me hope. I was becoming depressed and not moving much because of the pain. This morning I woke up thinking that I could go for a short walk. Wow! I will set some SMART goals today.”

“It's fantastic - very easy to use - thank you for putting it together. I wish I understood all of this 20 years ago! I've become increasingly fearful & restricted by pain. Hoping this will change things!!!”

At the end of each video in the ‘For Everyone’ section, the viewer is requested to download the health plan, document their goals and take this along to their GP to form the basis for a discussion about pain; 2847 plans have been downloaded.
For Painbytes, the adolescent component containing interactive elements, 95% would recommend the website to others, and 75% will change something about the way they manage pain as a result of viewing the material.

**Objective 3**: to promote clinician understanding and uptake of the materials

**Methodology**

Prior to the website development, survey monkey and focus groups were used to determine levels of understanding of how to manage pain as well as to identify support needs of clinicians. This was delivered across the following disciplines and organisations:

- a) Nursing (APNA)
- b) Physiotherapy (APA)
- c) Psychology (PSA)
- d) GP through RACGP, ACCRM and selected ML

Survey monkey was used to follow up post implementation of the website across the same disciplines. Also direct contemporaneous feedback is received by the ACI from the users.

As a result of viewing the website and its materials:

- 95% of respondents reported that they are confident to develop a health care plan for pain management with their patient.
- 86% were moderately or very satisfied with the materials on the website.
- All clinicians had recommended that their patients visit the site.
- 98% said it was easy to access and use and beneficial to their practice.

**Figure 4 (Formative Evaluation)**

- 95% of clinicians are confident to develop a plan
- 86% report satisfaction
- 98% report ease of use and beneficial to practice

---

**Website utilisation**

- 95% of clinicians are confident to develop a plan
- 86% report satisfaction
- 98% report ease of use and beneficial to practice
The website is being used by clinicians in the following ways

- Recommended in initial correspondence to GP
- Recommended in initial correspondence to patient
- Showing the website and how to navigate in educational sessions
- Playing the video resources in waiting rooms
- Use of videos in educational sessions to stimulate discussion
- Distribution of fact sheets as part of educational sessions
- Displaying posters and distributing postcards promoting the website
- Providing education to the patient prior to consultation
- To develop health care plans
- To develop patient goals

Clinic Quote

“I am blown away by how thorough and easy to navigate this website is. I can see that it would be useful to pass onto patients - but I would like to use it in the practice and work through them with patients over time. It will be time consuming but time well spent”
"I really do appreciate this website as well as my clients. I am a nurse in a community chronic pain support program on Vancouver Island.

“I have had great success with a new young patient with chronic pain. I was seeing her for the first time, after her orthopod had washed his hands of her. I sent her off to look at the website. When she returned the following week, she was ‘speaking my language’. I was able to chat about her sensitised nervous system, smart goals, exercise, helpful and unhelpful thoughts and she was an active patient in the conversation. She is hopeful that things will change and can see a way forward!

“Great for Health Care Workers working in other areas. Many of our clients have chronic pain but do not see GPs or others to help manage as they often feel discriminated against when seeking health care. This ensures we can provide appropriate information, treatment & support”

Areas for further promotion, focus and development have been identified through the process. These include:

- A need to embed materials within General Practice software and health pathways. Work with some Local Health Districts and Medicare Locals (PHNs) has commenced to develop Health pathways. Further opportunities will be pursued as they arise. Behaviour change in General Practice is slow to develop.
- A need to increase exposure and dissemination to General Practice and Practice Nurses. Ongoing promotion of the website continues by pain clinics locally, and also strategically via links with the PHNs, the National Prescribing Service, Networking Health NSW, and community partnerships.
- The development of tailored resources for people of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Aboriginal background. Work in preparing these materials is currently underway with focus groups and consultation processes commenced in Aboriginal and CALD communities across NSW and LHD.
- The conversion of clinical documents and forms so that they are interactive. This has now been completed for many documents.
- The conversion of clinical resources so that they are in rich text format for GPs. This will be done in 2015-2016.

Conclusion:

The Pain Management Network website was developed to provide freely accessible evidence based information, tools and resources to consumers and clinicians wanting to manage pain according to the best science available. The main measures of success include the utility, uptake and geographic reach across NSW and Australia more broadly for consumers and clinicians as well as the ability to prompt behaviour change in the way individuals and clinicians manage pain. The early indicators from survey and response...
analysis, and from google analytics, are favourable and exceed expectations. This supports the project as effective in providing a sustainable means of supporting pain management in primary care and the community at large.