



## Exercise

We help you to carry out a graduated programme designed to improve general fitness and increase levels of activity. We help you to set baselines for what you can do now, and work towards some agreed goals. We also teach you relaxation skills in order to reduce tension and improve sleep.

## Adapt

You have probably already made adaptations to the way you do things because of your pain problem. At PUEA we aim to help you to examine your current habits and to make changes that will be most helpful to you in the long term. We look at how you carry out your activities, how you tend to think about things and how you cope with flare ups and set backs to help you work out the best coping strategies.

Group follow-up meetings are held at six weeks and nine months.

## What can we expect from you?

Success depends on considerable effort and input from you, and for this reason we ask you to think carefully before accepting the challenge. We can teach you skills, advise and help, but only you can become expert with regards to your pain and your life.

An honest desire to be well is essential, and the challenge to change is not easy. Completing a Pain Management Programme makes more sense if your goal is to improve your ability to cope with ongoing pain.

A readiness to embrace new ideas is helpful, but what is most important is that you enrol with the aim of helping yourself.

A pain management programme is not something we do to you; it is something that you do for yourself.

*The rewards of a fuller life  
- make it worthwhile.*

## CONTACT US

Persistent Pain Service  
Taranaki District Health Board  
David Street  
New Plymouth

**Telephone:** 06 7537742 ext 7532

**Fax:** 06 7537802

Published: Communications Team  
Responsibility: Persistent Pain Service  
Date Published: July 2008  
Last Reviewed: Feb 2011  
Version: 2

TDHB 0807-26

## Taranaki DHB Persistent Pain Service

PUEA

*Pain: Understanding, Exercise, Adapt*



*Pain Management Programme*

www.tdhb.org.nz





## ■ ■ INTRODUCTION

Difficult persisting (chronic) pain problems need to be tackled from more than just one angle. In Taranaki, we have developed a pain management programme called PUEA to help people with persistent pain.

## ■ ■ WHAT IS PERSISTENT PAIN?

We often think we know what other people's pain is like, yet pain can have very different meanings to different individuals. Persistent pain refers to any pain continuing for more than three to six months.

When someone has a pain that does not get better, the assumption might be that the pain is continuing because the degree of injury or damage is particularly bad. We know that in persistent pain it is not that simple.

When the pain has gone on for a long time, there are always other factors affecting it other than the original injury or cause. As the person does less because of the pain, there may be secondary problems in muscles and joints causing alterations to fitness, flexibility or posture.

As other parts of life become affected, such as work, relationships and family activities, more psychological factors may become significant, such as fears about the severity or cause of the pain, or depression. These can all add up to influencing the processing of pain messages by the nervous system.

Very often a vicious circle develops with all of these changes adding up to worsen the difficulties experienced by the sufferer. The more they hurt, the less they can do, the less they do, the less fit they become and the less they are able to enjoy the pleasurable things in life. They may be troubled by the side effects of tablets and poor sleep thus worsening their mood.

All too often routine treatments don't cure the pain or there can be hassles in dealing with the system, leading to more frustration and disappointment. This worsens matters further and leads to a sense of hopelessness and helplessness as the person asks themselves "will it always be like this?" and "is there nothing that can be done?"

*This is where pain management comes in.*

## ■ ■ WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT PERSISTENT PAIN?

PUEA offers a different type of approach to managing pain. We accept that you have a persistent pain problem. However, our focus is helping you to find ways out of the vicious cycles and traps that you may find you have become caught up in as a result of your pain.

You may need to make changes in many different areas which will then add up to making a difference to how you manage your pain. We believe that help from many health practitioners is needed to help you make these changes. We work as a team to allow us and you to tackle the problems from every angle.

*Our team* consists of physiotherapists, doctors, psychologists, occupational therapists and a pain educator.

## ■ ■ THE PROGRAMME

*What can you expect from us?*

A 10-week programme – a group programme including approximately 8-10 people, all with persistent pain.

The programme runs each day from 9.30am until 2.30pm.

*Weeks 1 - 6: Tuesdays and Thursdays*

*Weeks 7 to 10: Tuesday*

Before being accepted on to the programme, you will be seen by members of the team to discuss your readiness to participate. This is called an Application Interview. If you are found to be suitable to attend the programme, you will be seen for a Preprogramme Assessment. This, along with the application interview, is vital to our planning. You are encouraged to bring a family member, partner or close friend to both the application interview and the family/friends day, which is held during the programme.

*Topics covered on the programme:*

As well as meaning 'to rise up', PUEA stands for Pain: Understanding, Exercise and Adapt. The different topics we cover on the programme can come under these headings:

*Understanding*

We aim to help you to understand your pain problem, to overcome your fears, to reduce tablets if they don't help and to give you the confidence to explain your pain to others when necessary so that they can understand how you are managing.