

Service Development for Chronic Pain: A Model from Remote Australia

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The Opportunity

With limited resources in remote areas, chronic pain remains one of Australia's most costly health conditions. Urban areas are now well serviced by pain-specialised centres. However, rural and remote Australia continues to grapple with isolation, access and limited opportunity for specialised professional development. These challenges invite innovative approaches to growing the capacity of local providers and developing services that address pain-related disability.

An Integrative Approach to Building Local Capacity

The service development model devised by Kovacevic, McCrea and Hallam (2017) addresses the following considerations:

Service Definition



Pain NT is the result of **co-ordination across multiple businesses** in Darwin. Teleconference connects the team (locally and interstate). Services are delivered in person.

Financial Analysis



Initial focus on the compensation system in Darwin, to cover the cost of a Fly-In, Fly-Out worker with pain service co-ordination experience. The service will expand to include non-compensable injury in 2019.

Stakeholder Mapping



We have established connections with colleagues in Alice Springs and several of the ACCHOs in light of our collective need for pain rehab innovation. The NTPHN faces other significant chronic illness challenges, which has made **pain a lower priority**.

Operational Risk Management

Through collaboration, we have managed the challenge of staff turnover and developed a growing pain-specialist knowledge base among our consortium.



PainNT

BETTER TOGETHER



Effective inter-professional treatment for chronic pain uses a biopsychosocial approach, which recognises overlap across the allied health disciplines, and acknowledges the impact of psychosocial factors ("or flags") on treatment and recovery (Worksafe Victoria, 2012)

Our Learnings

- Pain Rehabilitation in remote areas presents distinct challenges that are different from those in urban settings. However, these challenges are not insurmountable.
- Innovative application of established pain management principles, with regard to local resources and context, will improve service access and local provider capacity.
- The **National Action Plan for Chronic Pain Management** will be strengthened by the inclusion of a rural and remote perspective and acknowledgement of the diverse populations living in these areas.



A team of allied health professionals & researchers who collaborate with health services to develop treatment programs & training modules to **upskill** health staff.
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www.industryhealthsolutions.com

References

Victorian Workcover Authority Melbourne (2012) Clinical Framework for the Delivery of Health Services.
Kovacevic R, McCrea, S & Hallam, K. (2017) Innovative Service Development in Chronic Illness Populations. 12th National Allied Health Conference, Sydney

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