

Information for Patients Regarding Referral to the York and Scarborough Pain Management Clinic

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact: Pain Management Clinic
Telephone: 01904 725395
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Contents	Page
Introduction	2
Why have I been referred to the pain management clinic?	2
Members of the multidisciplinary team	3
What types of treatments are available	5
What will happen at my first appointment.....	6
What should I do if I cannot attend my appointment.....	7
What research can I do about pain management while I am waiting for my appointment?	7
Tell us what you think of this leaflet.....	7
Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).....	8
Teaching, training and research.....	8
Leaflets in alternative languages or formats	8

Introduction

We are a consultant-led specialist multidisciplinary team. Our mission is to listen, to assess and empower people to manage persistent pain.

This leaflet aims to provide you with some additional information about your visit to the pain management clinic at York Hospital.

It will tell you:

- Why you have been referred to the pain management clinic.
- Who is in the multidisciplinary pain team.
- What types of treatment available.
- What will happen at my first appointment.
- What do I need to do if I cannot attend my appointment.
- What happens if I do not attend or miss my appointment without informing anyone.
- Is there anything that I can research about pain management before my appointment.

The pain management clinic is staffed by a multidisciplinary team (MDT). This includes doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, and administrative staff.

This team specialises in, and has expertise in, the management of persistent chronic pain, acute flares of chronic or complex pain conditions and management of severe cancer pain that is unresponsive to medications.

Why have I been referred to the pain management clinic?

Your GP or other specialist has referred you for further information, support, and evaluation of your pain.

Each person's referral information is reviewed individually by the pain doctors, and you will be categorised as needing an urgent or routine appointment. An urgent appointment should be offered within four weeks of receipt. A routine appointment should be offered within eighteen weeks. At present we have a significant backlog and the waiting times for routine appointments are far longer.

Nearing the time of your appointment, you will be sent a questionnaire about your pain. It is **essential** that you fill in this questionnaire and bring it to your appointment as it forms an important part of the assessment process.

Members of the multidisciplinary team

Role of the doctor:

All patients who come to the pain clinic are under the care of a doctor. However, you may not see that doctor in person, but the doctor will always oversee, guide, and advise the development and delivery of pain management plans for you where necessary. The doctor holds ultimate responsibility for your episode of care within the pain clinic.

If deemed necessary, the doctor will examine you or offer a further explanation of scans, results, medication, or management decisions.

The doctors undertake interventions where appropriate that may include spinal or regional nerve blocks; joint injections or before implant of neuromodulating devices. These interventions are delivered as an aid to patient rehabilitation and improved self-management strategies rather than a treatment goal in themselves. Prior to any of these treatments a full explanation of these interventions will be provided.

Role of the nurse:

The specialist nurses who work in the pain clinic can help and support you in managing your pain. They will work with you on both a one-to-one basis or in a joint or group format in the following ways:

- Provide advice and support in the use of pain medication and how to use it more effectively. This may include reducing your medication if appropriate.
- Issuing and reviewing the use of a TENS machine (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation)
- Developing your understanding of long-term pain and its complexities to help you move forward with self-management strategies.
- Advice and support in the use of an SCS (Spinal Cord Stimulator) including input into the SCS Pain Management Programme.
- Nurse-led clinics involving the review of the SCS device which may include reprogramming.
- Input into the four week and the twelve session Pain Management Programmes.

Role of the occupational therapist:

An occupational therapist has professional skills in helping you manage any difficulties in your occupational performance i.e., the ability to organise and perform your daily routines and to fulfil life roles within your home and work environments. They can help you carry on with your daily activities despite your pain. This may include working together on strategies including pacing, relaxation, goal setting and sleep management.

Role of the physiotherapist:

Physiotherapists are movement experts who will support you with physical goal setting and explore the role of activity and exercise as part of your pain management tool kit. We use and share principles of pain science to help you better understand how to manage your condition. We work closely with other members of the multidisciplinary team (MDT) to offer a holistic approach to your care.

Role of the clinical psychologist and cognitive behavioural therapist:

Chronic pain is not just a physical experience: it is a complex condition that affects most areas of life. With time, pain can have a negative effect on your sleep, your relationships, mood, self-esteem, and it can reduce your ability to cope with other life events. Pain psychology supports individuals to deal with these experiences. This includes assisting you to come to terms with your experiences and developing skills to manage the impact. It may also help you to learn how to reduce your frustration, anger, and other negative emotions and to improve your overall quality of life.

As well as offering individual therapy to some patients, the pain psychology service offers consultation and training to MDT colleagues with the aim of integrating psychological approaches and understanding to all our pain management.

The service supports the running of pain management groups and joint clinics. This provides a group setting to help people develop skills for pain self-management. It also assesses patients being put forward for spinal cord stimulators and for joint working with other members of the pain management team.

Role of the admin team:

We have a highly experienced and dedicated admin team who do their best to try and keep the clinics and pain lists running smoothly and efficiently. They will field patient and professional enquiries through telephone, e-mail, and letters. If you have any concerns regarding your appointments, they will advise you where they can and redirect you to the appropriate department if necessary.

They are responsible for typing all the correspondence, requesting scan reports and letters from other NHS institutions. They also ensure that correspondence is available on our computer systems and sent to GPs or other specialists in a timely manner where appropriate.

They are not clinicians and are not able to give any clinical advice. They are not able to expedite any appointments unless requested to do so by a clinician within the pain clinic. They can pass on important information to and from the clinical teams where appropriate. Please be advised that sometimes they may not be able to answer the phone immediately and you may need to leave a message on an answerphone. They will always endeavour to get back to you within 24 hours of your call.

Please always try and be polite, calm, and understanding when you call. They will always do the same for you. The Trust has a zero-tolerance policy towards abusive behaviour, and you will not aid your cause by becoming angry, rude, or upset.

We realise that it can be very frustrating when you are in pain, and you are having to wait for appointments, they are not the people with whom your frustrations lie. The admin team can help you navigate the system.

What types of treatments are available

- Discussion, and advice around medications.
- Instruction in the use of TENS machine.
- Specific graded exercises and advice in maintaining mobility.
- Support with implementing essential daily living activities.
- Advice on good sleep hygiene.
- Addressing the emotional impact of pain.
- Diagnostic injections.
- Radiofrequency denervation (rhizolysis) procedures.
- Neuromodulation implants.
- Intrathecal catheter placement.
- Pain education and latest pain science information.

Not all these treatments will be appropriate for you. These and other strategies may be delivered on an individual basis or within a group setting.

What will happen at my first appointment

Your first appointment is always face-to-face, except in exceptional circumstances. You will be seen by one of the multidisciplinary team. We work very closely together, and the new patient clinic is always overseen by a specialist pain doctor. Regardless of which member of the MDT undertakes your initial assessment, your management plan will always be discussed with the rest of the team and signed off by the doctor on the day.

The questionnaire that you complete prior to your appointment will be used as a guide for the consultation and additional information will be added to it on the day.

The main aim of the management plan is to help improve your quality of life to help you become more active and more in control of your pain.

Appointments:

There is a high demand and long waits for appointments in the pain clinic. As a result, your appointment may be rescheduled several times. Please try to keep track of your appointment, we realise it can be confusing. If you are not sure of your appointment date and time, please contact our admin team to confirm. Please be aware that missed appointments cost the NHS both money and wasted resources, so please do everything you can to attend or cancel in advance.

Your initial appointment will be scheduled for up to a maximum 40 minutes.

If you have been unable to locate your questionnaire before attending or one has not been sent to you, please ensure that you arrive **at least 30 minutes early** so that you can complete it before your allotted appointment time.

If you are late or have not completed the questionnaire before your allotted appointment time, your assessment with us will have to be reduced and you may be asked to come back for a further appointment before we can complete the full assessment and agree a management plan.

At the end of the initial assessment, we will agree a proposed management plan with you. You will be given clear verbal instruction as to what that will involve and what you might expect from us.

This may involve further appointments to receive support or advice from other members of the team or to complete additional investigations or interventions.

What should I do if I cannot attend my appointment

You should tell us as soon as possible if you are unable to attend an appointment or if you no longer wish to attend. This allows us to reallocate your appointment slot and improve our efficiency.

Individuals who fail to attend their appointments without informing us in advance increase waiting times for others and waste valuable and limited NHS resources. If you have been given good notice of the appointment and have not told us that you cannot attend, you will be discharged back to the care of your GP and will not be offered any further appointments. If you want a referral back to the pain clinic you will have to ask your GP to refer you again and will have to wait for an appointment.

What research can I do about pain management while I am waiting for my appointment?

Resources...

British Pain Society
www.britishpainsociety.org

Arthritis Research UK
Versus Arthritis | A future free from arthritis

You tube Tame the Beast and Explain pain in five minutes
Tame The Beast — It's time to rethink persistent pain ([youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...))

York Pain Clinic
https://padlet.com/York_Pain_Clinic/york-pain-clinic-nwsgnjy6on6ynynd4

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact: Debbie Hunter, Lead Pain Management Nurse, 1st Floor Outpatients, York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE, Telephone 01904 725395 or 725397, or email debbie.hunter16@nhs.net.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website: www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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