

A Guide to the MSK Online Programme (MOP)

Persistent pain (also sometimes called chronic pain) refers to pain that lasts beyond 3-6 months. Often persistent pain does not resolve with physical or medical treatment. We have heard from patients that group based approaches (e.g. Pain Management Programmes) can be useful in helping people to move towards living the life that they would like, with pain.

In the context of COVID-19, we have developed an online version of the self-management programme.

What Happens if I have been Referral for a MOP?

After you have completed an assessment with a member of the Persistent Pain Team, you may be offered an online Programme to help you live better with pain, (MOP: MSK Online Programme). This leaflet is designed to help you decide if you would like to join a MOP group.

What is the MOP?

The MOP is an 8 session (twice-weekly) online psychoeducational group for people living with persistent pain.

The MOP offers the chance to learn self-management strategies to help you to make changes to live more meaningfully with pain. This approach does not offer a “cure” for pain but rather helps you to start expanding your world so that pain is a smaller part of your world.

The group also allows the opportunity to connect with others living with pain as we know that it can be helpful to connect with others also living with pain.

During the MOP you will start to:

- Learn about theories of pain
- Look at the impact of pain on your thoughts, feelings & behaviours
- Learn about pacing of activity and rest
- Develop skills to manage pain flare-ups
- See how to set manageable goals for yourself
- Understand how movement can help in managing your pain

How Does it Work?

The MOP is run using Microsoft Teams and you will be emailed links to each session beforehand. In addition you will be sent weekly links to videos made by the team talking about what we know about living well with pain (4-5 short videos).

Beforehand, you will be invited to an online orientation session to get familiar with Microsoft Teams and to meet other members of the group and facilitators.

You would attend 1 hour online sessions as a group, 2x per week for 4 weeks (8 sessions) as well as a follow-up session after 6 weeks.

What Can You Expect From Us?

- **The group is facilitated by members of a multidisciplinary team** which includes: a clinical psychologist and a physiotherapist.
- **The online sessions focus on your questions about the videos**, and these form the basis for group discussions
- **Making changes to how we work with pain can be both physically and emotionally challenging.** So while it is psychoeducation and not group therapy, the team aim to support you to start gently making these difficult changes at your own pace in a compassionate way.

What am I Expected to do?

The group involves time, commitment and the necessary resources (stable internet connection, a device such as a laptop, iPad or tablet) for you to get the most of it.

You will need to be able to commit to attend all the sessions & watch the videos between the sessions. We have found, where people miss sessions, they struggle to make changes and catch up with the group conversations that have or are taking place.

We ask that everyone try to watch all the videos beforehand, as this will be the focus of the sessions. If people come without watching the videos, they do not have the background either to engage in the group discussion or to make helpful changes.

We cannot offer people another MOP, so please do think beforehand whether you can commit to attend and watch the videos.

The MOP involves being able to practice applying some of the techniques that we discuss in your everyday life. This is what makes the most difference in the long-term and it also allows you to see what aspects feel tricky to do.

We try to allow the opportunity for everyone to contribute to the group within the time constraints.

Confidentiality

You can find out about how we manage your records and maintain your confidentiality (within legal requirements to keep you and others safe) [on this page](#).

You will be part of a group and together (the group and the team) we aim to provide support and create a safe enough space for people attending to explore putting these ideas into practice.

Should you be offered a place in a group, you will be sent further information on how you can play your part as a group member in supporting other group members to feel safe and respected (which they will also be asked to do for you, as a group member). We will discuss group 'guidelines' in the group orientation session, to allow people to talk about what this means to them,

You will be expected to respect these guidelines and those we outline around behaviour and confidentiality for the benefit of the whole group.

Included in this further information will also be what to do if you have technological problems in accessing the online sessions.

Also when offered a group, please think about whether you have a private space where you can attend (so other group members will not be overheard — part of group confidentiality). *If you are not sure about this, please discuss it with the team.*