

Monday, 13 January 2020

## Chronic pain sufferers to benefit from \$1million boost



An estimated 3.2 million adults currently live with chronic pain in Australia, with that number forecast to double over the next 30 years. Apart from the daily challenges of dealing with their condition, those living with chronic pain are at increased risk of depression, anxiety, poor self-esteem and social isolation.

North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) recognises the impact that chronic pain has on our community and the need for better services to support individuals to effectively manage their pain.

We are committing \$1million to a new tender to fill the gap in chronic pain management in primary care settings, especially for those for whom the high intensity tertiary outpatient clinics may not be appropriate.

The tender seeks providers to help consumers manage their chronic pain in the community. This will give consumers a valuable new alternative to current pain management approaches that are delivered mainly through hospital-based outpatient clinics, where timely access can be a significant issue for many people.

The tender is for new services across two regions, north and western Melbourne, with \$500,000 being committed to each. The services will involve teams of health professionals from different disciplines working with people who experience chronic pain. The focus will include helping people understand and self-manage their chronic pain where appropriate.

NWMPHN CEO Adjunct Associate Professor Chris Carter said that with the number of individuals living with chronic pain increasing, a program such as this is greatly needed.

“The percentage of individuals living with chronic pain is increasing rapidly and often these individuals are not diagnosed or treated for the side effects that can accompany chronic pain, such as social anxieties and the loss of independence,” A/Prof Carter said.

“A service that improves the health and wellbeing of those living with chronic pain and supports them to self-manage their pain within a supportive community setting, without having to attend hospital, will be better for them, their loved ones and the health care system.”

Tender applicants are asked to submit an evidence-based multidisciplinary approach to managing chronic pain and improving the physical and mental wellbeing of those living with chronic pain. Applicants are encouraged to add specifics regarding the needs identified in their region. The funding is for two years.

NWMPHN is inviting applicants to tender from the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020. Applicants will need to apply through Tenderlink. Visit <https://www.tenderlink.com/mpcn/>

**An industry briefing session will be held at the NWMPHN office at 10.30am - 11.30am on Tuesday 21 January. This will be an opportunity to receive information about the tender, tender process and ask any questions.**

### For all enquiries:

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### ABOUT PHNs

Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health, PHNs began operation on 1 July 2015 and are responsible for coordinating primary health care and facilitating improved health outcomes in their local community. Melbourne Primary Care Network operates the North Western Melbourne PHN.

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