

## Clinical tools for pain rehabilitation

Treating patients with complex musculoskeletal pain can be extremely challenging. By the time they see you they have often consulted a variety of healthcare professionals and have been left with a sense of helplessness. The aim of this course is to provide some insights and tools to assist you to work with these patients, to make sense of their pain, and help them successfully manage their pain.

**This course** is a person-centred approach to assist healthcare professionals to translate the latest evidence in neurophysiology and human behaviour into the practical processes of gathering information, clinical reasoning and designing individualised interventions, to address the question “Why is **this** patient presenting in **this** way, at **this** time?”

### **Session 1 “It’s not what we do – it’s the way that we do it!” (2 ½ hours)**

Evidence shows that the specific effects of a technical intervention only minimally explain a successful clinical outcome. It is the common factors associated with the patient, therapist and the context of the encounter that are responsible for most of the beneficial outcomes.

We will explore the factors that positively and negatively influence the relationship, and the process of building a strong therapeutic alliance through open, reflective and empathetic communication. We will also look at how positive emotions such as resilience can broaden a patient’s options, and how assisting patients to access their strengths can give them a sense of competence, enabling optimal functioning and performance.

### **Session 2 - A systems approach to clinical reasoning (2 ½ hours)**

Traditional approaches to clinical reasoning seek to identify a specific structure that is responsible for the patient’s presentation. This model may be appropriate for an acute injury, where pain is an appropriate protective response to enable healing.

However, when pain has become maladaptive and persistent it has a significant impact on a patient’s life. A systems approach helps us to identify the key factors, including the patient’s thoughts, feelings and behaviours as well as the underlying changes in the neuro-endocrine, immune and motor systems. The outcome of this process is a multidimensional picture that enables an individualised treatment approach.

A variety of patient presentations will help to make this approach more accessible.

### **Session 3 – Changing behaviour – changing pain (2 ½ Hours)**

“If you always do what you’ve always done – you’ll always get what you’ve always got”

The aim is to enhance a patient’s ability to succeed with a program tailored to their unique multidimensional clinical presentation and context:

This workshop will include:

- Facilitating a change in mindset by helping a patient to make sense of it all and what they can do about it
- Accessing their belief structure, self-efficacy and resilience
- Identifying lifestyle and activity changes
- Collaborative goal setting and development of a graded exposure programme
- Supporting motivation, adherence and resilience