

Better pain management approaches

Narrative review of studies published in the last 10 years in English excluding studies with findings about illicit drugs.

TYPE OF PROJECT

Rapid review

AIM OF THE PROJECT

To identify the current evidence relating to the better management of chronic pain in a compensable population.

PUBLICATION DETAILS

Developed with funding from and at the request of, SIRA in 2020.

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

- John Walsh Centre for Rehabilitation Research
- The University of Sydney
- SIRA

Background



- Chronic pain can be a serious burden affecting all aspects of life and contributes to diminished quality of life
- In Australia about 20% of chronic pain sufferers receive workers compensation
- There may be factors inherent in compensation schemes that affect the experience of chronic pain
- Reduced employment associated with chronic pain was estimated to cost \$36.2 billion in 2018

Results



- The evidence for medical interventions in chronic pain is weak
- Evidence exists for cognitive behavioural therapy and pain education (including online)
- The biopsychosocial model is considered best practice with a key component of active self-management
- There is evidence for a range of interventions for different pain conditions and different stages
- Cannabis-based medicines are not first-line treatment of any pain condition

Discussion



- The greatest predictors of widespread pain are individual and psychological factors, not the injury itself
- Chronic pain is one of the most prevalent, costly and disabling conditions in clinical practice and the workplace, yet remains inadequately treated
- A multidisciplinary approach may be necessary to address the many dimensions of chronic pain
- Psychosocial approaches to pain management rely on self-management strategies to reduce pain, improve mood and resilience

Recommendations



- People with chronic pain should not rely solely on pain medication for pain relief
- Evidence supports active over passive management strategies
- Health education for stakeholders is required to:
 - Accept the existence of chronic pain
 - Recognise chronic pain is in the central nervous system
 - Recognise a healthy lifestyle is still possible despite chronic pain
 - Advise treatments that are supported by evidence