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Pollie Pedal kicks off on 1 April—Let's weigh in to support the role of carers

The annual charity bike ride Pollie Pedal will kick off on 1 April with a week-long ride starting in Canberra.

Each year, Pollie Pedal gets politicians out of Canberra and into communities—allowing Members of Parliament to meet people from all walks of life, while raising money for important causes.

Painaustralia is pleased to support the ride, which this year will raise awareness of the role of carers with the funds raised going to Carers Australia. It is our hope that in future years, Painaustralia may also benefit as the official charity for the event.

This year donations will be collected through [Everydayhero](http://Everydayhero.com.au).

Painaustralia's "every day heroes" in the event are brothers Mike and Graeme Shelley. Mike is a Health Psychologist and Service Director at Innervate Pain Management in Newcastle.

Let's support Mike and Graeme Shelley in Pollie Pedal to raise funds for carers.

"It's a great honour to be invited to ride in the event as it's by invitation only and the number of participants is strictly limited," says Mike.

"Graeme and I will be looking to further the cause of Painaustralia and represent people with pain and their carers, along with people who provide treatment, and researchers.

"Please join us to support this great event and a really important cause.

"If we can raise a nice bunch of dollars, it may further our aspirations for Painaustralia to be the next charity to benefit from the event.

"So please send this [link](#) out to your networks and join us for this super exciting ride."



Mike Shelley

Professor Bruce Robinson AO to Speak at Painaustralia AGM

Members will have a very timely opportunity to meet and hear from the Chair of the Medical Benefits Review Taskforce, Professor Bruce Robinson, at Painaustralia's Annual General Meeting on 18 April.

Formed by Federal Health Minister Sussan Ley last year, the Taskforce is charged with reviewing an out-of-date Medicare funding system to bring it into line with contemporary health challenges, including more appropriate funding for management of chronic conditions.

Professor Robinson, an endocrinologist who is also Chair of the National Health and Medical Research Council, brings significant expertise to the taskforce from his previous role as Dean of Medicine at The University of Sydney, where he assisted in the formation of the Discipline of Pain Medicine.



Prof Bruce Robinson

Professor Robinson will explain the role of the Taskforce and how the Medicare review will align with the Review of Management of Chronic Conditions including chronic pain, in Primary Care.

He will also share views on undergraduate education and the need for healthcare professionals to be better equipped to manage chronic conditions, including chronic pain.

During the meeting, Painaustralia Chairman Robert Regan will present the findings of the survey *Mapping Our Future* and facilitate discussion about Painaustralia's role and priorities going forward.

The AGM will be held 18 April 4-6pm at the offices of Corrs Chambers Westgarth in Sydney.

We welcome your attendance, please email karina.knight@pinaustralia.org.au

Consumer Day Offers New Insights into Pain in WA

People on the west coast had the opportunity to hear from some of Australia's leading pain clinicians and researchers at the Living Well With Pain Consumer Forum & Symposium, held in Fremantle last weekend.

For many of the more than 180 in attendance, it offered insights and new hope; for others, it gave them a chance to have their voice heard.

"Now in its fourth year, the day is primarily about education. It also has a role in bringing chronic pain into the open, creating a dialogue, and offering comfort and hope to people," said Painaustralia CEO Lesley Brydon.

"We were pleased to see such a fabulous turn-out on the day, and are grateful to our expert speakers who gave their time voluntarily to share their knowledge."

This year's speakers included Dr Stephanie Davies and Dr Nicholas Cooke co-authors of *Rewire Your Pain*, Professor Michael Veltman Director of Anaesthesia at Joondalup Hospital and Gynaecologist and Pain Specialist Dr Susan Evans, Pip Bennan from the Health Consumers' Council WA and Lesley Oliver from Carers WA.

During the forum, there was healthy discussion about what can be done to address the ignorance and stigma associated with chronic pain—still poorly understood in the community.

Forum panelists included Dr Vance Locke, Dr Tim Pavy, Dr Judith Thompson and Co-Founder of EndoActive Australian and NZ, Lesley Freedman.

Forum outcomes will be used to inform Painaustralia's advocacy work into the future.

The Living Well With Pain event was held in association with the Australian Pain Society, and hosted by the Churack Chair of Chronic Pain Education and Research, University of Notre Dame.

It was supported by local organisations WA Specialist Services, Arthritis & Osteoporosis WA, Health Consumers' Council WA, Carers WA and the WA Pain Champions.



Telehealth Brings Chronic Pain Program to Outback Queensland

A telehealth group service in South West Queensland is overcoming the tyranny of distance, providing much needed support for long-term chronic pain sufferers.

Patients turning to the South West Hospital and Health Service (HHS) Manage Your Pain Telehealth Group say they have learned to manage pain and improve quality of life during its first year of operation.

The group links South West HHS centres by video-conference to the Gold Coast Interdisciplinary Persistent Pain Centre (IPPC) at Robina Hospital for two-hour sessions over four weeks.



Feedback has been positive, with health professionals confirming the value of pain management educational treatments through telehealth delivery.

The pain management group is the only such service operating in rural and remote Queensland with much of the groundwork done by St George Hospital Social Worker Heather Scriven.

"Persistent pain may never go away, but participants, including some with pain for more than 20 years, say they are learning how to manage it," Mrs Scriven said.

"We find that participants start to move forward after sharing their fears and management strategies with others suffering persistent pain, helping overcome the vicious cycle of physical, mental and social suffering."

[Read more](#)

Support Us

Your donation will help Painaustralia continue to advocate for better healthcare for Australians who live with chronic pain. Your support could make all the difference.



DONATE NOW

Telehealth Pain Program Helps Patients and Families in Metro Sydney

The Children's Hospital at Westmead is now offering telehealth for telephysio and telepsychology for patients managing chronic pain who live in metropolitan areas, in addition to rural and regional New South Wales.

This will allow patients and their families to reduce time taken off school and work to travel to and from appointments.

Clinicians initially provided the services to parts of rural and regional New South Wales, as part of a trial to evaluate a chronic pain telehealth package developed by the NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation.

Beginning in July last year, the trial involved the Complex Pain Clinic at the Children's Hospital Westmead as well as Orange Chronic Pain Clinic at Orange Base Hospital.

The Complex Pain Clinic also provided telehealth services to paediatricians located in regional and remote areas.

However, three months into the six-month trial, the benefits were obvious, and the telehealth service was expanded.

"The trial was highly successful, bringing specialist paediatric chronic pain services to rural and regional New South Wales," said The Children's Hospital at Westmead Paediatric Pain Specialist Dr John Collins.

"As a result, telehealth has now become part and parcel of the work we do."

The trial was a collaboration between NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation, Local Health Districts, Health Direct Australia and the Ministry of Health.

Read more in the [Chronic Pain Telehealth Pilot Project Evaluation Report 2016](#)

Congratulations to the Australian Pain Society on the success of Pain: Meeting the Challenge

As always, this year's [APS](#) annual scientific conference offered new insights and research into chronic pain as well as scope for debate with expert speakers from Australia and around the globe including Germany, Denmark, Israel and Canada.

Plenty of social options included a gala dinner at the Royal Perth Yacht Club and visit to Sculptures by the Sea at Cottesloe Beach.

Over 600 participants enjoyed the networking opportunities and respite from the 40 degree heatwave at the impressive Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Sticking to the Plan is Essential in the Battle to Manage Pain

Even the most committed patients sometimes find it hard remembering those exercises described with stick figures on paper, or a new breathing technique—but adherence to the plan is essential to ensure an effective outcome.

According to research, non-adherence rates range from 25 to 60 percent, and treatment failure or inadequate treatment are the most common cause of hospitalisation in people aged over 65.

An upcoming conference to be held in Sydney on 1 July, will give healthcare professionals insight into ways in which they can improve adherence in their patients.

The Treatment Adherence Symposium is the first specialist symposium on adherence to be held in Australia.

It will examine what influences adherence, what causes non-compliance with treatment, and what can be done from a clinical perspective to motivate patients, with a mix of local and international expert speakers.

Conference organiser Dr Claire Ashton-James, a Research Psychologist at the Pain Management Research Institute, says the issue is relevant to anyone working in chronic care.

“Patients with chronic conditions tend not to adhere to medication or other forms of treatment, because the long-term nature of the illness often makes them lose motivation,” said Dr Ashton-James.

“Many practitioners are not aware of their role in patient adherence, however there is a lot of evidence to suggest the way in which practitioners communicate with patients influences adherence behaviour.”

The Treatment Adherence Symposium is designed to assist all healthcare professionals involved in the treatment of chronic conditions, including physicians, psychologists, pharmacists and physiotherapists.

[Find out more](#)



Claire Ashton-James

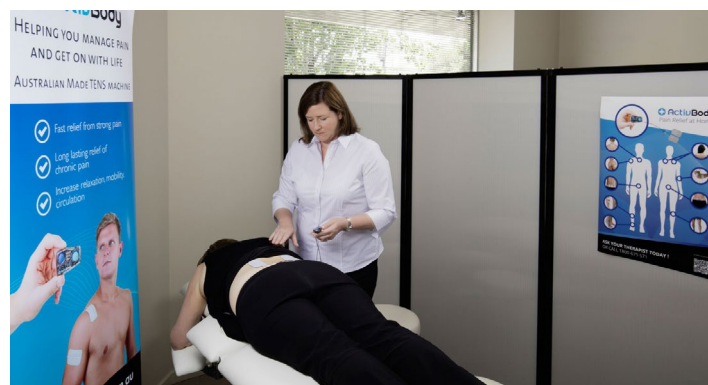
TENS Pain Clinic First

Australian company ActivLife, first in the world to develop the TENS machine for pain management, has now launched a clinic dedicated to the management of pain using TENS.

Based in the Melbourne suburb of Essendon, the clinic is a practical extension of the company's ethos, to bring drug-free pain therapy to people, and help them live a more active life.

Managing Director of ActivLife Robyn Murphy says 40 years of experience has proven the value of the TENS therapy.

“This is the first clinic that we know of dedicated to the management of pain using TENS therapy,” she said.



“It's not just about TENS, it's about empowering patients with chronic pain by showing them how to take control of their own pain relief using a method that is effective, available on demand, and free of drug-related side-effects.”

Through Clinical Nurse Educator Melinda Aylett, the clinic provides patients with one-on-one support so they can get the most out of TENS therapy and reach their pain management goals.

“A lot of people with chronic pain, especially the elderly, need assistance and guidance to operate the TENS machine effectively,” said Ms Aylett.

Patients are guided on proper usage at the clinic, before taking a TENS machine home for a three-day trial.

They must have a confirmed medical diagnosis of chronic pain, and can be referred by their GP or simply walk-in for a consultation.

All patients undergo a thorough pain assessment prior to trialling TENS, as well as after their trial, to measure the effectiveness of the treatment.

They are also educated about a multidisciplinary approach to pain management, in addition to TENS therapy, and are encouraged to return to their medical practitioner for ongoing assistance with their condition.

To find out more, visit the [ActivLife Pain Management Clinic](#) website or [download the TENS fact sheet](#).

Michael Cousins AO Retires as Chair

Professor Michael Cousins AO has retired as Chair of Anaesthesia and Pain Management at the Royal North Shore Hospital and The University of Sydney.

A world leader in pain management, Professor Cousins became the Foundation Chair in 1990.

In this capacity, he established a large multidisciplinary centre for the study of pain medicine—the Pain Management Research Institute (PMRI), which has become internationally recognised for clinical care, teaching and research.

Professor Cousins has had an enormous influence on the development of pain medicine and pain management in Australia. In 1975 he was the Foundation Professor of the Department of Anaesthesia and Intensive Care at Flinders University and while in Adelaide, established a major multidisciplinary centre for pain medicine at Flinders Medical Centre.

In 1979 he was the Founding President of the Australian Pain Society; and in 1999, he became the Founding Dean of the Faculty of Pain Medicine (ANZCA).

He also played a key role in the recognition by the Australian Government of Pain Medicine as an independent medical specialty in 2005.

As Chair of the 2010 National Pain Summit, Professor Cousins led development of the world's first National Pain Strategy.

Professor Cousins maintains his role as a Director on the Board of the PMRI, as well as a Clinical Representative on the Board of PainAustralia.



Professor Michael Cousins AO

Pain Squad App

A new electronic pain assessment tool is now available to help health professionals better understand the nature of cancer pain in children, and how to treat it.

Developed by Dr Jennifer Stinson and the iOUCH research team at The Hospital for Sick Children, [Pain Squad](#) is a multidimensional smartphone-based pain assessment app for children and adolescents with cancer aged 8 to 18.

The app uses gaming as a tool for tracking pain symptoms. Users gain game-based rewards and it has 90 percent compliance with completion of pain assessment diaries, a better result than even monetary rewards (70 percent compliance).

A study into the usefulness of the app to evaluate pain from cancer-related surgery, found children enjoyed using it, and said it helped them speak with their health teams about pain, even when they were reluctant to do so.

In the study, Pain Squad was used to collect pain data in the morning and evening before and after surgery, via pre-programmed alarms.

Dr Stinson believes the next step is to capture real-time data to measure the effectiveness of a wide range of pain treatments.

Pain Squad is currently only available for iOS devices. [Find out more about the Pain Squad App](#)



Nursing Position in Pain Management at Greenwich Hospital – Call for Expressions of Interest

Expressions of interest are sought from registered nurses (CNC or NP level) with experience in pain management interested in taking up a new position in the Greenwich Hospital Pain Management Service.

Greenwich Hospital is a Schedule 3 Public Hospital run by the not-for-profit charity HammondCare and is a teaching hospital of the University of Sydney.

The Tier 2 Pain Management Service was started at the hospital in 2012. Further information about the service can be found [here](#). If you would like to find out more, please contact Professor Phil Siddall on 02 8788 3941.

Workplace Revolution Required

When chronic pain results in early retirement, it creates a dent in workforce productivity, reduced revenue for government, and significantly lower quality of life for the unemployed individual.

It makes sense to implement return-to-work and preventative strategies, to ensure people with chronic pain can continue to work, especially as our population ages and the tax dollar needs to keep rolling in.

But most workplaces have been reluctant to make changes, and even actively discourage people with chronic pain from working, through organisational barriers and lack of support.

According to new research, what we need is a workplace revolution.

The research published in the [*Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*](#), has identified specific barriers and enablers to keeping people with chronic pain in the workforce.

While the physical aspect of the work environment and the nature of the work were identified as important, the most fundamental factor in enabling productive work was the degree of support from the employer.



A supportive employer allowed and encouraged flexibility in the overall number of hours worked; timing and length of breaks; rostering of work; and flexibility for individuals to organise their own work schedules to maximise productivity.

In other new research, published in [*Occupational and Environmental Medicine*](#), a systematic analysis of the literature found individually focused interventions are most likely to reduce job loss and sick leave, for people with persistent musculoskeletal pain.

Potentially successful interventions included vocational or multidisciplinary rehabilitation, ergonomic workplace assessments and exercise programs.

These studies were undertaken in partnership between La Trobe University, Arthritis & Osteoporosis Victoria and Curtin University.

New Descriptor for Chronic Pain?

The International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) is considering a new descriptor for the mechanism of chronic pain to help treat the large number of patients whose condition cannot be described as either nociceptive or neuropathic.

Creating a new descriptor of chronic pain may provide clearer prescribing options for GPs—drug therapies where appropriate and non-drug therapies such as referral to allied health professionals for patients with chronic pain, which is neither nociceptive nor neuropathic.

Professor Milton Cohen, Director of the St Vincent's Hospital Pain Clinic in Sydney, and international colleagues are arguing that the 2011 redefinition of neuropathic pain excludes a large group of patients who do not have obvious neuropathy, defined as disease or damage to the somatosensory system.

"GPs need to recognise that neuropathic pain has quite a narrow definition—it's not just the default descriptor for pain that isn't nociceptive. It's pain that is due to neural disease or damage," Professor Cohen says.

"However this doesn't cater for a whole lot of people who have pain that is not nociceptive but have features suggestive of neuropathic pain such as sensitivity to touch, easy exacerbation and spread, yet they don't have neuropathy. We need a third descriptor."

Professor Cohen says this group of patients typically have diagnoses including fibromyalgia, complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS) type 1, musculoskeletal pain (such as non-specific chronic low back pain), and functional visceral pain disorders (such as irritable bowel syndrome and bladder pain syndrome).

This pain has previously been referred to as unknown or idiopathic, but these terms do not describe the mechanism. The pain likely involves a change in nociceptive processing, probably in the central nervous system, Professor Cohen says.

This is an excerpt from a story published by 6minutes. Read the full article [here](#).



Professor Milton Cohen

Reboot Online Pain Program – Volunteers Wanted

The Department of Pain Medicine and the Clinical Research Unit for Anxiety and Depression, both based at St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney, are seeking adults in Australia for a study to evaluate a new online pain management program.

Called 'Reboot', this comprehensive, multidisciplinary program aims to help people manage their chronic pain better.

This is a free, confidential, 16-week program involving eight lessons of internet-based psychological therapy with a physical therapy component that can be done from home in a patient's own time.

This online program contains modules, resources and videos, as well as regular contact with pain management specialists and clinicians.

Successful applicants for this trial will be allocated to one of two groups:

1. The 'Reboot' online program – this group will receive the online immediately.
2. Treatment As Usual group – this group will continue to engage in any treatment for their pain, but will be asked to complete some questionnaires during a waiting period. After completion of questionnaires, they will receive full access to the specialist online 'Reboot' program.

For more information and to apply online, visit virtualclinic.org.au/our-programs/the-pain-program

To contact researchers before applying email research@thiswayupclinic.org or phone 02 8382 1400.

This study has been approved by St Vincent's Hospital: HREC/15/SVH/32.

VirtualClinic
at St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney



Help Change Lives: Become a Member of Painaustralia

As Painaustralia enters our sixth year, we can reflect on some positive progress towards implementing the [National Pain Strategy](#).

Along with new public multidisciplinary pain clinics opening in parts of regional Australia, there has been increasing [media](#) attention focused on chronic pain, raising community awareness about this debilitating condition.

Painaustralia has been working to influence policy makers through one-to-one contact as well as key [submissions](#) to the Federal Government.

We are now working with the new Primary Health Networks, to help develop capacity in primary care with a focus on promoting education and training for healthcare professionals.

Chronic pain is not just an older person's disease; it can affect anyone. Numerous personal [stories](#) have already been told on our Campaign for Pain website.

We are committed to do what we can to help people with chronic pain and their families, not just now, but into the future.

[Help us change lives. by becoming a member.](#)

Volunteers with Chronic Pain Needed for Study

People aged over 18 with chronic pain are needed for a study to validate the *Engaged Living Scale*, which is being conducted by the University of New England.

The Engaged Living Scale is a questionnaire that helps guide choice of treatment, according to the framework of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy.

The aim of this therapy, is to help people live life to the full, guided by their core values, and experiencing all facets of life mindfully, including painful thoughts, sensations and emotions.

Participants will be asked to complete an online survey, which will ask questions about their values, and the degree to which they can live life according to those values, despite difficulties that may arise due to chronic pain.

This research is completely anonymous, and has ethics approval.

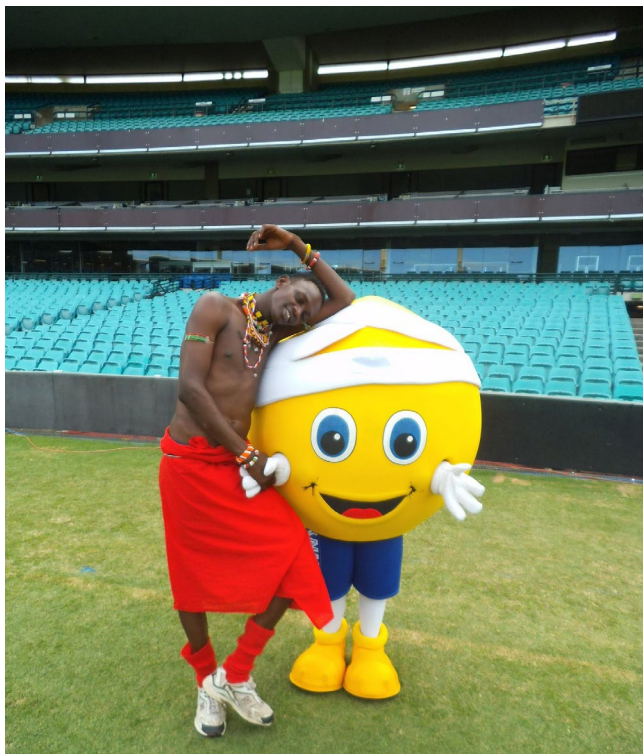
Join the [online survey](#), or for more information, email Kerry Rowe krowe6@myune.edu.au

Walk Against Pain 2016 Success

The Walk Against Pain at the Sydney Cricket Ground gets bigger and better each year, with more than 150 attending this year's fundraiser for the [Pain Management Research Institute \(PMRI\)](#).

Walkers included the Maasai Warriors, the "Richies" and Sunny the Sun from Sydney Children's Hospital.

The PMRI thanks Mundipharma, Pfizer and St Jude Medical, ANZ and NAB, for providing walkers, cricketers and volunteers.



Pain Management in Practice

Pain Management in Practice is a two-day interdisciplinary workshop to provide practical training to clinicians who manage clients with persistent pain, to help them achieve their full potential.

Presented by a psychologist and a physiotherapist, the workshop will develop understanding and skills in clinicians, to better assess pain; provide effective treatment options; help build client goals; and help clients who get 'stuck'.

Small group work is undertaken to allow time to practice new skills and numbers are strictly limited to ensure the workshop is highly interactive.

Workshops will be held in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. For more information or to register visit www.empowerehab.com/workshops/



Norman Doidge in Australia

Dr Norman Doidge, Psychiatrist and pioneer of modern neuroscience, will be in Australia this May, sharing his knowledge about the adaptability of the brain and the implications for human potential and treatment.

In this world-first two-day workshop, he will introduce the latest ideas about what goes wrong in a range of emotional, psychiatric and brain disorders; the five stages of neuroplastic healing; and how to determine which stage needs clinical attention in your patient.

He will introduce the "plastic paradox": how certain conditions, such as addiction, bad habits, defense mechanisms, chronic pain, dystonias, PTSD and OCD are caused by the brain's plasticity going awry, to reinforce maladaptive mechanisms, and identify clinical strategies to remedy these.

Workshops will be held in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. For more information or to register visit byronclinic.com/norman-doidge-2016/



Dr Norman Doidge

TENDO: Ten Days of Endo 21-30 March

It's Endometriosis Awareness Month and Sydney Pelvic Physiotherapist Heba Shaheed is inviting people to increase their endo-knowledge by signing up to TENDO.

The free online endometriosis summit known as TENDO, will give people the opportunity to learn more about pelvic pain management, from leading gynaecologists, physiotherapists, nutritionists, mind-body therapists and endo activists.

Anyone registered will receive a link to two 20-minute interviews with endometriosis experts over ten days, from 21 to 30 March 2016. Interviews will be available for 48 hours.

To register or for more information, visit [TENDO](#)



EVENTS



PMRI Visiting Scholars Program

The PMRI Visiting Scholars Program is a free monthly event providing an opportunity to hear from national and international experts in the field of pain. When: [Visit website](#) for 2016 dates, 4-5pm
Venue: Auditorium, Kolling Building, Royal North Shore Hospital, Sydney



TRE Workshops

Trauma Release Exercises (TRE) uses the body's own innate process of involuntary shaking and tremoring in a safe and controlled way to physically release the effects of chronic stress and unresolved trauma including PTSD. When: 12-14 March Brisbane; 9-11 April Melbourne; 30 April – 2 May Sydney; 11-13 June Perth
More information: www.traumareleaseexercises.com.au



Workplace Mental Health Conference

This is a comprehensive platform like no other to help organisations not only comply with legal obligations but also increase performance productivity and reap all the benefits associated with a psychologically healthy workplace. When: 6 April 2016 (pre conference), 7-8 April 2016 (conference)
Venue: Swissotel, Sydney



Caring for Country Kids (Alice Springs)

This 3-day conference will focus on the health needs of children and adolescents in rural and remote Australia. When: 17-18 April 2016
Venue: Alice Springs Convention Centre



Societal Impact of Pain Annual Symposium

This year's SIP conference will address themes including: pain as a quality indicator for health care; pain as a disease or multi-morbidity; the relevance of pain in cancer care and rehabilitation; and rehabilitation and reintegration of workers with pain. Participation is free however spaces are limited. When: 23-24 May 2016
Where: Brussels, Belgium
More information: www.sip-platform.eu/events/sip-2016/program.html

AUSTRALIAN
PHYSIOTHERAPY
ASSOCIATION



The Australian Physiotherapy Association's 2016 Business and Leadership Conference

The 2016 Conference Program Committee is putting together a dynamic program to explore the theme of Driving Innovation. Three themes will make up the program—Engage, Lead, Act—and will showcase keynote speakers, invited speakers and abstract submissions
When: 26 August 2016
Where: Darwin

For more events please see our website www.painaustralia.org.au