

MEDIA RELEASE

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Talking About Pain: Our Words Matter

To mark the commencement of Pain Awareness Week, the Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP today released [Talking About Pain: language guidelines for chronic pain](#) developed primarily by consumers to promote the use of more positive and less stigmatising language when talking or writing about pain and people living with pain conditions.

Painaustralia Consumer Advisory Group Chair, Sister Mary-Lynne Cochrane said; ***'Words matter. As a person who has lived with chronic pain for over 40 years, I have often been defined by my condition, sometimes in very negative ways when being labelled a 'sufferer' or 'victim'. This has sometimes had a big impact on my mood, self-esteem, and levels of depression. Sometimes the words used about my pain and how I was managing it made my experience of pain worse. My condition is one part of me, not who I am.'***

Talking about Pain is a resource developed with the support of the Federal Government and aims to provide a guide to those working in the media and general community on the use of appropriate, inclusive and non-stigmatising language when talking or writing about chronic and persisting pain and people living with these pain conditions.

Minister Hunt said; ***'the language we use and the stories we tell can send powerful messages to people living with chronic conditions, either causing distress and further harm or giving people hope and optimism that they can still live a good life even faced with significant physical and mental health challenges.'*** This resource is part of the Federal Government's commitment to implementing the National Strategic Action Plan for Pain Management and is intended to improve the lives of those living with chronic and persistent pain.

Painaustralia CEO, Carol Bennett said; ***'many consumers have told us they are afraid to admit they live with a chronic pain condition for fear of being judged negatively or discriminated against. This resource draws on the experience of those with the first hand knowledge of what can make a difference to improve our community's understanding of pain and how we can better respond to it'***.

Talking About Pain is available [here](#).

Talking About Pain: language guidelines for chronic pain was developed by Painaustralia with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health.

Media contact: Priyanka Rai, Painaustralia Media Manager
Phone: 0423 341 017
Email: Priyanka.rai@painaustralia.org.au