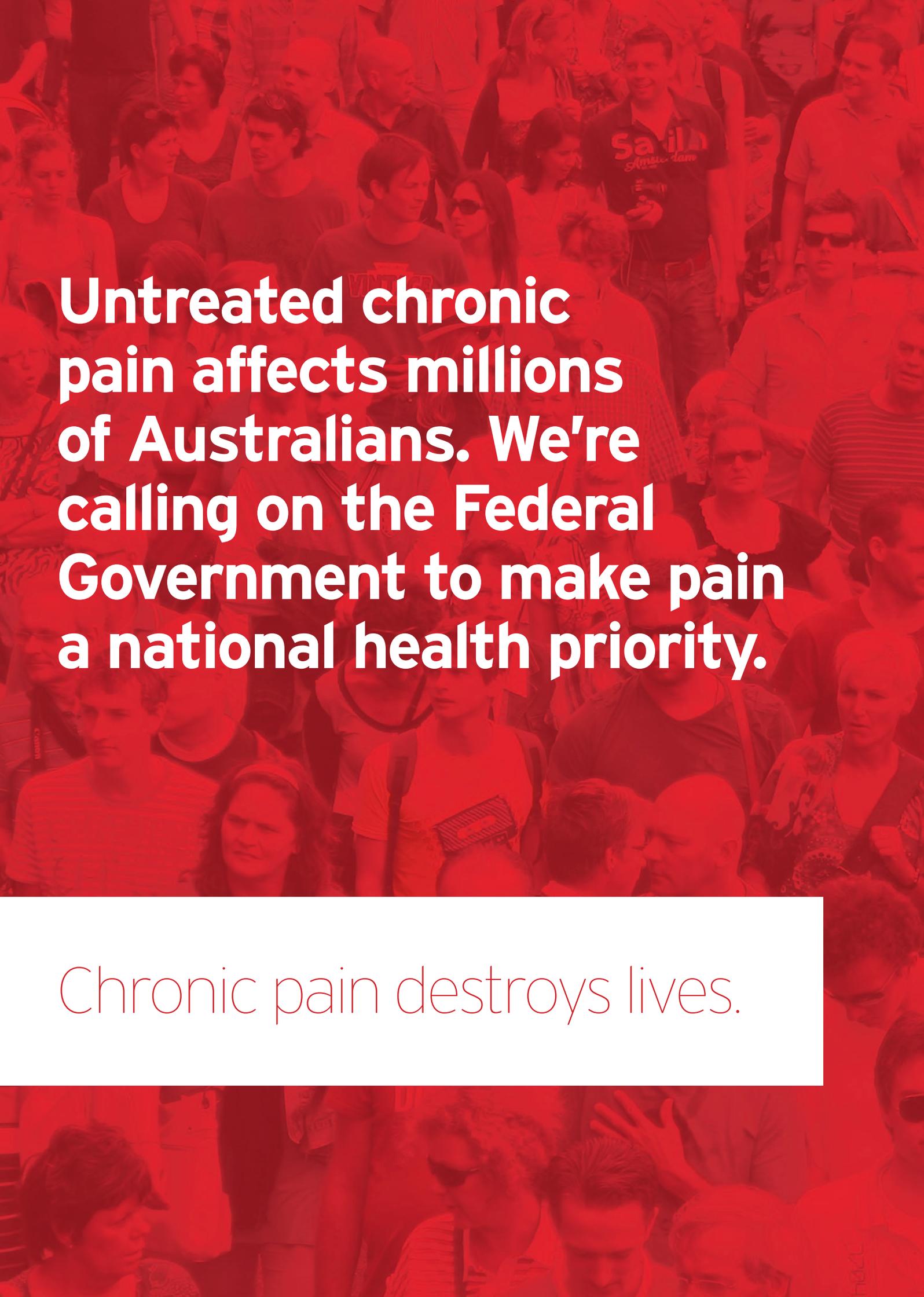


# OUR ANNUAL REVIEW 2016





**Untreated chronic  
pain affects millions  
of Australians. We're  
calling on the Federal  
Government to make pain  
a national health priority.**

Chronic pain destroys lives.

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**COVER IMAGE:**  
**Painaustralia Ambassador Liesl Tesch AM MP**  
after wining gold at Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.  
Courtesy of the Australian Paralympic Committee.

# Chairman's Message

The National Pain Strategy has been a catalyst for major change in the way pain is understood and managed in Australia. It has also been an inspiration for other countries.



Unlike many other worthy strategies, it was not left to languish in a bottom drawer. Rather it has been brought to life by the efforts of many organisations and individuals.

A coalition of the willing—including state governments, dedicated health professionals and consumer advocacy bodies—has recognised the need and taken action to develop services in line with the strategic framework.

At the same time, Australia has become a world-leading provider of best-practice pain management education and training programs for health care professionals.

However there is still an enormous need for better pain management in primary care, which is where the vast majority of people with chronic pain could—and should—be managed.

But current health reforms offer scope for change:

- PainAustralia has successfully advocated for pain management to be included in the MBS review and we anticipate this process will commence mid-2017.

- Health Care Homes offer an ideal model for team-based care for people with chronic pain.
- Concerns about opioid use including changes in access to codeine have highlighted the need for federal government leadership to ensure access to safer alternative approaches to pain management.

This will be our focus for the year ahead.

As Lesley Brydon steps down as founding Chief Executive Officer it will also be the key challenge for a new leader.

We acknowledge the significant progress achieved under Lesley's leadership. We are confident about PainAustralia's future and are pleased that Lesley will continue to play an advocacy role.



**Robert Regan**  
Chairman

# About Painaustralia

Painaustralia is Australia's leading pain advocacy body working to improve the quality of life of people living with pain, their families and carers, and to minimise the social and economic burden of pain on individuals and the community.

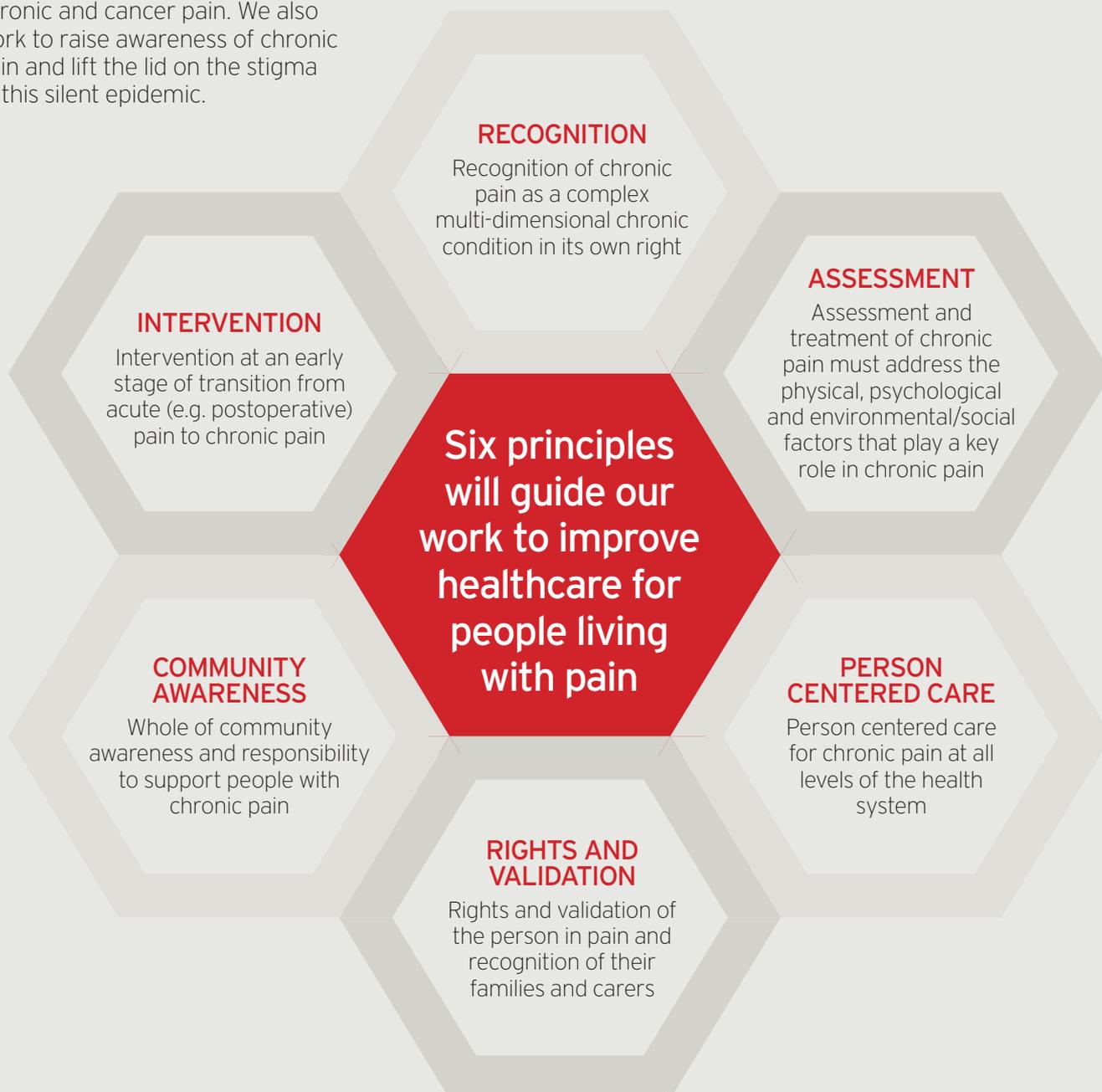
Established in 2011, our key role is to work with state and federal governments, health professional and consumer bodies, funders, educational and research institutions, to facilitate implementation of the National Pain Strategy Australia-wide.

The strategy aims to improve policy and practice in the management of acute, chronic and cancer pain. We also work to raise awareness of chronic pain and lift the lid on the stigma of this silent epidemic.

## Our Vision

Our vision is for a society where chronic pain is understood and effectively managed where possible in the community and primary care, using evidence-based, best-practice strategies and clear and accessible referral pathways through to adequately resourced tertiary clinics for more complex cases.

Through a collaborative approach with members and partners, we are advocating for chronic pain to be a national health priority.



# Our Board

We have a capable Board with expertise in law, finance, business management, health economics, consumer advocacy, clinical excellence and government policy:

**Robert Regan** (Chairman)

Partner-in-Charge of the Sydney Office of Corrs Chambers Westgarth

**Geoffrey Applebee** (Treasurer)

Chartered Accountant and adviser to professional services firms

**Professor Deborah Schofield**

Professor and Chair of Health Economics, Faculty of Pharmacy, The University of Sydney

**Professor Michael Cousins AO**

World-leading Pain Medicine Specialist

**Dr Penny Briscoe**

Head of Pain Management Unit, Royal Adelaide Hospital

**Associate Professor Malcolm Hogg**

Head of Pain Services, Melbourne Health

**Leanne Wells**

Chief Executive Officer of the Consumers Health Forum of Australia

**Elizabeth Carrigan**

Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Pain Management Association

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## Executive Team

**Lesley Brydon**

Chief Executive Officer

**Karina Knight**

Manager Special Projects

**Linda Baraciolli**

Communications Officer

**Anda Maria Illie**

Executive Support

## Ambassadors

**Dr Graeme Killer AO**

Former Principal Medical Adviser Department of Veterans' Affairs

**Liesl Tesch AM MP**

Member for Gosford, Paralympic Champion

"I've competed in seven Paralympic Games, in two different sports. I won two silvers and a bronze in wheelchair basketball and then won back-to-back gold in Rio and London with my sailing partner Daniel Fitzgibbon. I believe people with chronic pain can achieve great things, if given the right support."

**Liesl Tesch AM, Member for Gosford, Paralympic Champion and Painaustralia Ambassador**

# Members & Partners

Painaustralia's effectiveness as an advocacy body is directly related to the strength of our member network, which includes a wide range of consumer, health professional, education and research organisations working in the pain field.

Our website acts as a gateway to all pain services and information with links to national and international resources.

Members have access to our database of more than 5000—a vital communication network and the ideal vehicle to connect with anyone with an interest in pain and pain management.

Foundation members include the Australian Pain Society, the Faculty of Pain Medicine of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists and the Pain Management Research Institute, University of Sydney.

We are indebted to a number of corporate partners and pro-bono service providers (see acknowledgements) and benefit from our membership of the Consumers Health Forum of Australia.

Our **2016 Member Survey** confirmed we are on the right track with our priority focus on advocacy and awareness. In order of importance these activities were rated:

**89%**

influencing  
policy makers

**87%**

advocating for  
people in pain

**77%**

raising awareness

**75%**

of members  
believe consumers  
benefit the most  
from our work

# National Pain Strategy

The National Pain Strategy is a blueprint for the delivery of evidence-based pain management services for acute, chronic and cancer pain, with a focus on interdisciplinary care at all levels of the health system. Developed by a collaboration of more than 150 health professional and consumer organisations, it was approved by consensus at the National Pain Summit in 2010.

## National Pain Strategy Goals

- 1** People in pain as a national health priority
- 2** Knowledgeable, empowered and supported consumers
- 3** Skilled professionals and best-practice evidence-based care
- 4** Access to interdisciplinary care at all levels of the health system
- 5** Quality improvement and evaluation
- 6** Research to improve the understanding and treatment of pain

“Our model of care promotes self-management strategies that reduce reliance on medication and surgery. This has clear benefits for patients and the capacity to deliver cost savings to government, health insurers and employers.”

**Lesley Brydon, Painaustralia  
Chief Executive Officer**

A TRE (Stress, Tension & Trauma Release Exercises) workshop.

Courtesy TRE Australia  
Painaustralia member.

# The Cost of Pain

Chronic pain is a massive public health issue with a total cost to the community of \$34.3 billion. It is estimated that half of this could be saved by providing access to effective and timely treatment.

Defined as pain that lasts beyond the expected time for healing following surgery or trauma, chronic pain can often exist without a clear reason at all. It accounts for one in five GP consultations.

At least 40% of forced retirements are attributed to chronic pain, with the majority of people referred to public pain services being out-of-work involuntarily—part of a growing “workless” community.

Untreated chronic pain has a negative impact on all aspects of life. As the condition is often invisible, people with pain feel stigmatised and misunderstood—which compounds their sense of isolation and low mood.

Rates of depression are 20% higher among people with chronic pain and up to one in five suicides in Australia are related to physical health problems.



**“I had just finished my degree when I was diagnosed with Degenerative Disc Disease. I have severe pain and can't sit or stand in the one position for more than 20 minutes, so it has been difficult to find an employer willing to make allowances for me. After doing a pain management program, I learnt about pacing and other strategies to help me achieve my goals. I'm now studying a Certificate IV in Education Support and I'm looking forward to being able to work part-time.”**

**Amy Dallas**

Amy is just one of many patients who benefit from attending a multidisciplinary pain program. However, waiting times are far too long and the cost is out of reach for most people. Delayed access often means their condition worsens leading to long-term disability. Painaustralia is advocating for better Medicare and private health rebates to support these patients.

Advocating for access to specialist pain services for children is an important part of our work. In the past year, new paediatric pain services were established at Princess Margaret Hospital in Western Australia and Lady Cilento Children's Hospital in Queensland while South Australia is planning to do likewise at the Women's and Children's Health Network in 2017. Sydney Children's Hospital is expanding services to regional centres in New South Wales via Telehealth.

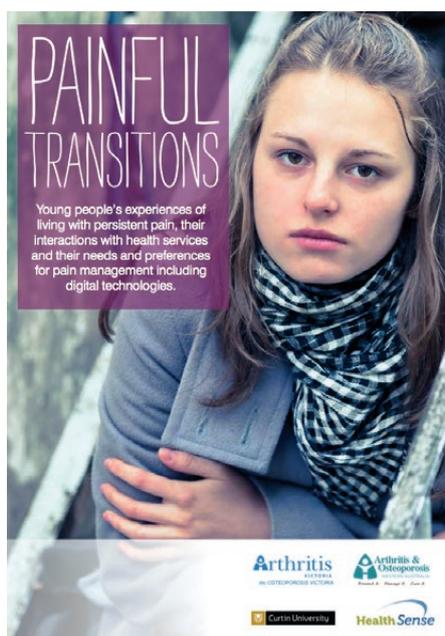
The prevalence of chronic pain in children and adolescents is similar to that of adults—yet Australia has only 12 paediatric pain specialists and six dedicated paediatric pain clinics in just four states.

Children with chronic pain often drop out of school or need to be home-schooled. They can become socially withdrawn and isolated, fail to achieve their academic potential and miss job opportunities. Entire families are affected, with parents missing work and siblings marginalised.

**“Young people with persistent pain need developmentally-sensitive health services, something that is lacking across Australia—services that are engaging, relevant, best-practice and easily accessible. In this context, digital technologies can play an important role.”**

**Associate Professor Helen Slater & Associate Professor Andrew Briggs, Co-Leads *Painful Transitions* report**

There is an urgent need for effective, timely, age-sensitive treatment to avoid unnecessary suffering and the transition of chronic pain into adulthood.



## The Truth About Kids and Pain

**12.6** is the average age of girls attending paediatric pain clinics

**12** is the average age of boys attending paediatric pain clinics

**40%** of patients at paediatric pain clinics have severe pain

**70%** of patients at paediatric pain clinics have moderate or severe disability due to pain

**33%** of children have been prescribed opioids for pain

**19%** of children are taking opioids daily or often

**40%** of children have no obvious cause for their pain

**83%** of teenagers have impaired ability to work due to pain

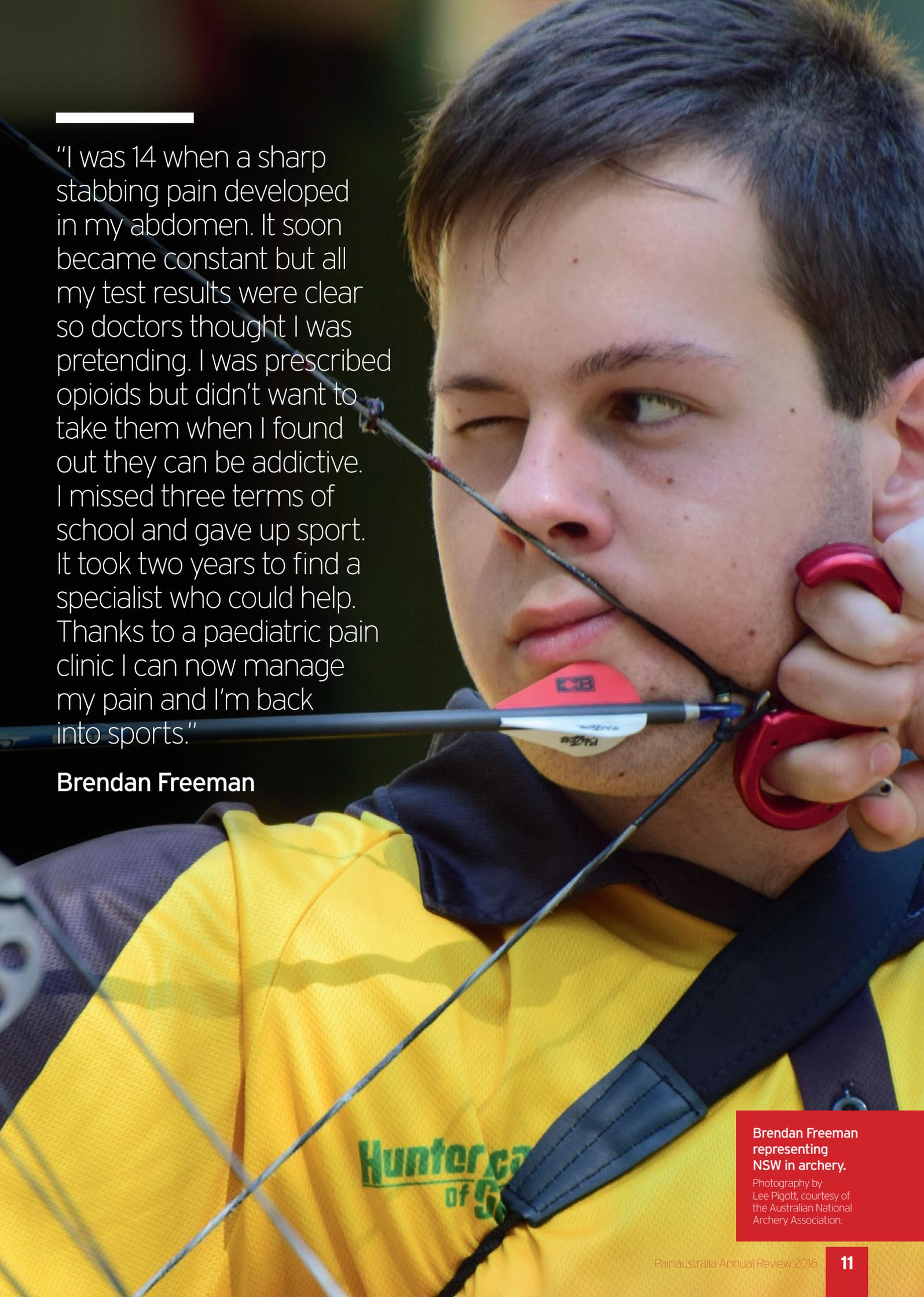
**12** is the average number of days teenagers miss school per term

**10** is the average number of days children miss school per term

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"I was 14 when a sharp stabbing pain developed in my abdomen. It soon became constant but all my test results were clear so doctors thought I was pretending. I was prescribed opioids but didn't want to take them when I found out they can be addictive. I missed three terms of school and gave up sport. It took two years to find a specialist who could help. Thanks to a paediatric pain clinic I can now manage my pain and I'm back into sports."

**Brendan Freeman**



**Brendan Freeman**  
representing  
NSW in archery.

Photography by  
Lee Pigott, courtesy of  
the Australian National  
Archery Association.

# Improving Access

Painaustralia continues to advocate for better access to pain services through our communications with Federal and State health ministers and policy advisers, participation in government committees and our work with media.

All state governments have now embraced recommendations of the National Pain Strategy, with funding for tertiary pain services. Private sector health providers are developing ways for people to access multidisciplinary pain services, despite the lack of adequate Medicare or Private Health funding.

Achievements in 2016 included a commitment by the South Australian Government to develop a state-wide chronic pain plan and to establish the state's first paediatric pain service at the Women's and Children's Health Network.

Other initiatives to advance the National Pain Strategy:

- **WA Health** released the Western Australian Framework for Persistent Pain 2016-2021, which will inform policy development and service delivery for people with chronic pain.
- **The South West Hospital and Health Service (HHS)** is linking HHS centres in rural and remote South West Queensland by video-conference to the Gold Coast Interdisciplinary Persistent Pain Centre at Robina Hospital.
- **The Children's Hospital** at Westmead in Sydney extended Telehealth services to patients with chronic pain who live in metropolitan areas, in addition to rural and regional New South Wales.
- **NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation** facilitated new Telehealth services to deliver pain management support to communities in Murrumbidgee, Far West and Southern NSW Local Health Districts, through partnership with pain clinics at Greenwich, St Vincent's and Nepean hospitals.
- **St Vincent's Private Hospital** in Brisbane has a new chronic pain management program for teens aged 14 and over. Called HOP (Help Outside school hours Program) it is conducted one afternoon per week during the school term.
- **Delmar Private Hospital** in Sydney is identifying patients who have persistent pain after surgery or injury while they are still being treated at the rehabilitation hospital. These patients are given a pain management plan and education about self-management before leaving the hospital.
- Melbourne-based **ActivLife** opened a clinic dedicated to the management of pain using TENS therapy. Patients also learn self-management skills from the clinic's Clinical Nurse Educator.
- Sydney-based **Prima Health Solutions** expanded its Healthy Weight for Life program, a weight loss and exercise program delivered remotely across Australia. The program can be referred by GPs for eligible osteoarthritis patients or self-referred through private health insurers.

**"Chronic pain services will be available in each Local Health Network, either through a dedicated pain service, via Telehealth or outreach services. Triage categories, clinical pathways and GP referral guidelines will be standardised to ensure patients receive consistent, quality care, no matter where they live."**

**Professor Dorothy Keefe P.S.M. Clinical Ambassador, Transforming Health, SA Health**



"The pain was excruciating, my social life stopped, I couldn't work and I could hardly sleep. Eventually I did a pain management course. I took up yoga and learnt mindfulness and meditation. Now my symptoms have improved and I'm medication-free."

**Jamie Martin**



## WA Premier's Award for Paediatric Pain Service

The Complex Pain Service at Princess Margaret Hospital in Perth won a Premier's Award for empowering families and communities to help children with chronic pain. The service was praised for its world-class clinical outcomes and significant cost savings in its first year of operation—including a 95 percent reduction in emergency department visits. This has been attributed to its experienced interdisciplinary allied health team and the innovative PACE (Pain Activity and Coping Education) program, which gives young people and their families the tools to effectively manage pain.

**Back row (l-r):** Pavia Walsh (Consultant), Emma Woods (Physiotherapist);  
**Middle row (l-r):** Leasa Ashton (Teacher), Julia Kingsley (OT),  
Jessica Klye (Administration Assistant);  
**Front row (l-r):** Suzi Taylor (OT Researcher) Anna Hilyard (Coordinator),  
Emily McGurk (Clinical Psychologist), David Sommerfield (Consultant).  
Courtesy of the Child and Adolescent Health Service.

# Supporting Best Practice

Painaustralia collaborates with a wide range of members and stakeholders working to improve clinical practice and patient outcomes.

We worked with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia to help develop MedsASSIST the monitoring system for OTC codeine and produced a support tool **Self-managing Chronic Pain** for consumers seeking to purchase codeine products. It is also downloadable from our website along with our other consumer fact sheets.

Our collaboration with MedSet General Practitioner Desk Set helps ensure Painaustralia is at the forefront of GPs minds when treating patients with pain, while our partnership with MedAdvisor is playing a role in helping patients better manage their medication.

We promoted new resources, education and training opportunities to keep health professionals up-to-date with the latest knowledge about pain and pain management. These included:

- **NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) Pain Network Quicksteps**, an online decision-making tool to help GPs assess patients with chronic pain and develop a management plan.
- **NSW ACI Pain Network opioid pain management tool** How to de-prescribe and wean opioids in general practice, for GPs to help patients gradually reduce their opioid consumption.
- **NSW ACI Pain Network Acute Low Back Pain Model of Care** to help with the assessment of low back pain in people aged 16 and over.
- **The Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) fourth edition of Acute Pain Management: Scientific Evidence**, a guide to managing acute pain to minimise the risk of ongoing pain following surgery.
- **The Faculty of Pain Medicine (ANZCA) clinical app**, the Opioid Calculator, to assist doctors with opioid dosing and help patients better understand safe use of opioids.
- **Neuroscience Research Australia (NeuRA) five-item questionnaire tool called PICKUP** to help identify whether a patient with acute back pain is likely to develop chronic pain.
- Consultant Pharmacist Joyce McSwan's **PainWISE program** to educate pharmacists about evidence-based pain medicines and pain management.
- **Pain Management Research Institute's educational program** including the first Treatment Adherence Symposium to teach health professionals how they can improve patient adherence to treatment plans.
- **Yoga for Pain Practitioner Training**. In 2016, 210 people accessed pain-sensitive yoga with Yoga for Pain teachers—70 from regional Australia where pain services are limited—and 32 additional Yoga for Pain practitioners were trained.
- The **Churack Chair of Chronic Pain Education and Research** at the University of Notre Dame in Perth, the first of its kind in the world, launched an online portal of information for students and collaborators.
- Patient advocate Soula Mantalvanos developed **{Pain} Train**, an online platform where patients can record and store personal pain-related information, reports and test results, to share with health professionals.

**“In many cases allied health professionals believe they are providing adequate care when the reality is they are often perpetuating chronic pain by not recognising the complex combination of biological, psychological and social factors. It’s not just patients who need support and education; health professionals could benefit as well.”**

**Terry Stewart, Osteopath and Painaustralia member**



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"The lack of collaboration between health professionals from different disciplines remains a stumbling block for many and interdisciplinary training programs open up a whole new world for them."

**Nick Economos Physiotherapist and Co-founder EmpowerRehab Pain Management (Painaustralia member)**

Co-founders of  
EmpowerRehab  
Pain Management  
in Practice  
Workshops  
Physiotherapist  
Nick Economos  
and Psychologist  
Jacqui Stanford.  
Courtesy EmpowerRehab.

# Changing Policy

Painaustralia worked hard in 2016 to ensure pain management services will be considered in the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) Review in 2017. We are advocating for funding for community based pain programs and a multidisciplinary Chronic Pain Care Plan.

We are also advocating for pain management services to be included in the roll out of Health Care Homes to facilitate improved access to team-based pain management.

Painaustralia prepared the following submissions to Federal Government initiatives:

- Medicare Benefits Schedule Review
- Medical Research Future Fund
- Aged Care Funding Instrument
- Aged Care Legislation Review
- Fifth National Mental Health Plan
- Access to Medicinal Cannabis
- Rescheduling of Codeine

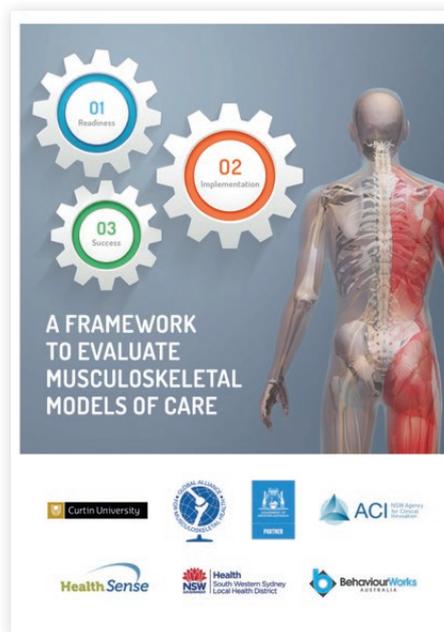
Other developments Included:

- More than half of the new Primary Health Networks (PHNs) identified chronic pain as an issue in their needs assessment. Some have begun developing pain programs.
- The Victorian Government will implement real-time monitoring of high-risk prescription drugs, providing \$29.5 million in the 2016-17 budget.
- A Framework to Evaluate Musculoskeletal Models of Care, led by Curtin University and supported by Painaustralia and other key stakeholders, provides a step-by-step approach to guide service delivery and planning for musculoskeletal conditions.



**“Our Clinical Councils have identified chronic pain as a priority. We want people to focus on function and how to improve it, rather than be limited by their experience of pain. Our practitioner training and our patient education programs emphasise this point.”**

**Dr Vahid Saberi, North Coast Primary Health Network Chief Executive**



**“The current chronic disease care plan which allows for just five allied health consultations is hopelessly inadequate to effectively manage the complex needs of people with chronic pain.”**

**Lesley Brydon, Painaustralia Chief Executive Officer**

# Raising Awareness

“I am so happy to have discovered your pain symposium and to have access to all the valuable information. So much made sense and all the speakers were approachable and seemed to really understand what we feel every day.”

**Participant, Living Well With Pain Consumer Symposium & Forum**



Living Well With Pain Consumer Symposium & Forum Perth 2016

Our fourth annual **Living Well With Pain Consumer Symposium & Forum** held in Perth attracted more than 180 people. Presented in partnership with the Australian Pain Society and local consumer groups, the event gives consumers a chance to hear from pain specialists at the forefront of research and clinical practice. It has been nothing short of life changing for many participants over the years.

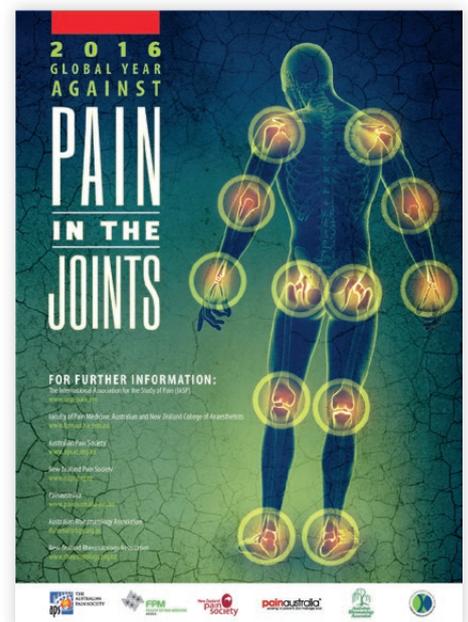
We supported Chronic Pain Australia's National Pain Week, during which we launched our **#campaignforpain** on the change.org platform with the goal of attracting 10,000 supporters for our advocacy efforts with government. The first phase of this campaign focused on the need for paediatric pain services. This generated media across all platforms—TV, radio, online and print—and added more than 1,000 signatures to our campaign, along with hundreds of comments.

A star of **National Pain Week** was cricketer Michael Clarke, whose story about living with pain throughout his career was picked up by several leading media outlets.

Throughout the year we assisted media with numerous requests for information about pain and access to patient stories to raise awareness.

Other media campaigns and events included:

- The International Association for the Study of Pain **Global Year Against Pain in the Joints**, in January.
- The Pain Management Research Institute's fifth annual fundraising **Walk Against Pain** at the Sydney Cricket Ground in February.
- Education and awareness raising events, in conjunction with worldwide **Endometriosis Awareness Month** in March.
- **#SpeakUp4Arthritis** campaign run by Arthritis Australia and associated state-based organisations to call for support for specialist rheumatology nurses, better care for osteoarthritis and research funding in June.
- **Be MedicineWise Week** in August to promote wise use of medicines.





The online news and opinion platform *The Conversation* published a 10-part Pain Series, raising awareness about topics such as the link between chronic pain and depression; fibromyalgia; painkillers; gender and cultural differences; and post-surgical pain.



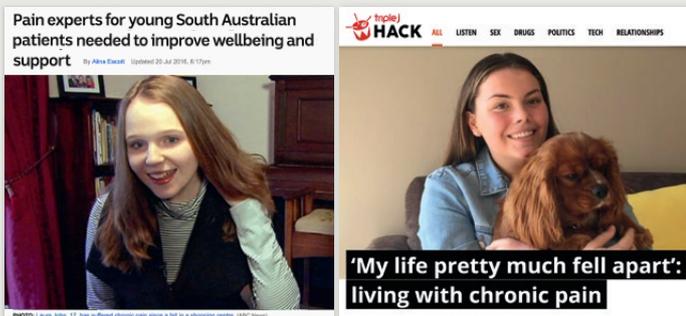
In June Painaustralia helped David Johns share his story in *The Sydney Morning Herald's Good Weekend* feature story about chronic pain.



### Pain management: when pain persists

Lesley Brydon says people with chronic pain do not want to be reliant on drugs. Picture: Britta Campion.

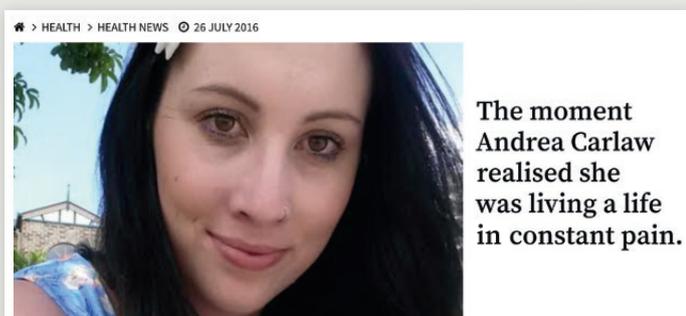
Painaustralia CEO Lesley Brydon featured in *The Australian* in February 2016. She also advocated for better pain management services and support in other media during the year.



Our #campaignforpain National Pain Week media included stories about Painaustralia patient advocates 17 year-old Laura John from Adelaide (ABC TV and ABC online) and 16 year-old Brooke Peterson from Sydney (JJJ Hack).



Pain Ambassador and cricket legend Michael Clarke supported National Pain Week 2016. He shared his story at the #NPW16 Conference in Sydney as well as in the media, including *A Current Affair* on Channel 9.



**The moment Andrea Carlaw realised she was living a life in constant pain.**

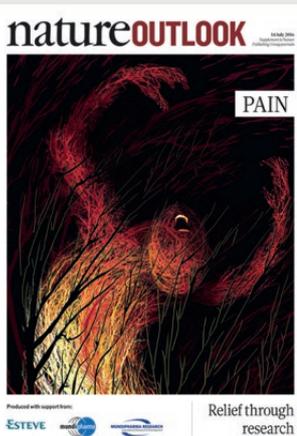
Mamamia raised awareness of chronic pain during National Pain Week with a story generated by our #campaignforpain featuring 24 year-old Painaustralia patient advocate Andrea Carlaw from Brisbane.

**Opioid addiction: Treatments get people off painkillers, but it is a hard road**



The chronic pain Chris Philips suffered was so bad he could not hold his newborn child. Now, thanks to pain treatments, he can go for scooter rides with his children. Photo: Christopher Pearce

Painaustralia patient advocate Chris Philips shared how a pain management program turned his life around in *The Sydney Morning Herald* in July.



*Nature Outlook* devoted its July issue to pain, in particular the complex nature of chronic pain, while *Science* published a special pain issue in November. This is a first for these highly regarded journals.



Painaustralia CEO Lesley Brydon and Painaustralia patient advocate Margaret McCulloch talked about pain after surgery on Channel 9's Today Extra in February 2017.

**Raising Awareness 2015-2016**

**83%**

increase in activity on Facebook

**77%**

increase in activity on Twitter

**24%**

increase in subscription to Painaustralia eNews

**5000+**

more than 5,000 subscribers to Painaustralia eNews

**100+**

more than 100 Painaustralia patient advocates

# Evaluating Outcomes

The National Pain Strategy calls for rigorous evaluation of patient outcomes from multidisciplinary approaches to pain management and other interventions.

A key tool in this process is the **Electronic Persistent Pain Outcomes Collaboration** (ePPOC) which is now collecting data from more than 50 pain clinics. The data will be valuable in improving practice and driving healthcare reform. (See a summary of patient outcomes on this page.)

The first round of data released from the ePPOC from seven participating paediatric pain clinics, revealed alarming figures in relation to children and pain. (See page 10)

The **Work Injury Screening and Early Intervention (WISE) study** led by Professor Michael Nicholas of the Pain Management Research Institute (University of Sydney) in partnership with NSW Health, EML and icare Self Insurance, confirmed the value of early intervention to help injured workers return to work and reduce costs.

This study won the Swiss RE Excellence & Innovation in Return to Work Award 2015/2016 and was named joint winner of the Framework and Systems section of the 2016 icare TMF (Treasury Managed Fund) awards.

**“There is an average cost saving of 22% at six months post-injury, when injured workers at high risk of delayed recovery receive early intervention and support through the WISE protocol.”**

**Professor Michael Nicholas, Director of Pain Education and Pain Management Programs, Pain Management Research Institute (Painaustralia member)**



## ePPOC Initial Outcomes 2016

Reduction in medication use by patients:

**47%** halved the amount of opioid medication they were taking

**42%** of those taking more than 40mg of oral morphine equivalent each day halved the amount they were taking

**% of patients making clinically significant improvements from referral to discharge:**

**25%** reported a lower average pain rating (pain intensity)

**58%** reported less pain interference (in their daily life)

**51%** reported improvement in depression

**39%** reported less anxiety

**52%** reported feeling less stressed

**53%** reported less pain catastrophising (distressing thoughts and feelings about their pain)

**48%** reported an increase in self-efficacy (confidence to do things despite pain)

# Supporting Research

Painaustralia joined with more than 80 research institutions to call for pain to be identified as a priority area for medical research.

We partner with research bodies to support funding applications and recruit participants for clinical trials.

Highlights for the year include:

- **Georgia Richards**, University of Queensland graduate in Biomedical Science, won the Australian's Women's Weekly Woman of the Future award.
- Research showed **ADAPT for Seniors** is more effective than usual care in reducing distressing pain, unhelpful attitudes and interference in activities, and improving mood.
- The report **Painful Transitions** used in-depth interviews with young people aged 16-24 to identify the significant impact of pain on their ability to study, work, socialise and manage the financial burden of pain.
- In its report **Australia's Health 2016** the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare revealed one in two Australians are living with chronic disease, with musculoskeletal conditions one of the most common.



"It has been wonderful to raise awareness of chronic pain in a national magazine. More people read the *Women's Weekly* than do the journal *PAIN*. I have received many messages from people who tell me stories of how chronic pain has impacted their lives or the lives of loved ones. I hope my future research will be able to improve the suffering and stigma of chronic pain."

**Georgia Richards, Chronic Pain PostGraduate Researcher and Australian Women's Weekly & Qantas Women of the Future, Judges Choice Winner 2016**

# Changing Lives

Education about chronic pain and self-management strategies can be life-changing—helping to reduce reliance on painkillers or unnecessary and sometimes damaging surgery or other intervention. It gives people hope.

The challenge is to bring evidence-based education to everyone, especially people who might otherwise not be able to access it. They include the elderly, children and teenagers, Indigenous Australians, people from non-English speaking backgrounds and those in regional and remote Australia.

We continue to advocate for pain to be recognised as a national health priority and for Federal Government leadership to coordinate a whole-of-community approach to implement the goals of National Pain Strategy Australia-wide.



**“I travel to rural and remote areas to give outreach pain education workshops. For many people these opportunities are life changing. Linda from Airlie Beach told me it was the best five hours she had ever spent after 20 years of living with pain.”**

**Noelene Hemmling, Clinical Nurse**



# Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the following companies and individuals who have generously provided us with pro-bono services:

- Corrs Chambers Westgarth for legal services
- ESV Accounting and Business Advisors for audit 2015
- Financial Reporting Specialists (FRS) for the preparation of financial statements
- Pitcher Partners Sydney for taxation advice
- BMF (Australia) for marketing advice
- Wildworks for strategic planning advice
- Professor Fiona Blyth – Professor of Public Health and Pain Medicine, Head of Concord Clinical School and Associate Dean, Faculty of Medicine University of Sydney for strategic advice
- Jane Baré for HR and recruitment advice and assistance
- Painustralia offices were donated by Enero Group

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