

Putting pain services on the map

Federal Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, has today launched [Painaustralia's National Pain Services Directory](#) at Parliament House. Over 200 specialist pain services are mapped across Australia in the Directory, enabling better access to best practice pain management for millions of Australians fighting what is often an invisible condition – pain.

Painaustralia CEO Carol Bennett said; “Most of the 3.2 million Australians living with pain don’t receive best practice treatment. Many rely solely on opioids and other medicines that bear their own costs. This Directory provides a much needed, easy to navigate way for those in pain to find pain specialists and clinics across Australia, greatly increasing awareness and access to better treatment options as supported by the [National Strategic Action Plan for Pain Management](#) .”

The Directory is a resource developed with the support of the Federal Government as part of a commitment to invest a [record \\$6.8m to improve understanding of pain](#). Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, said support for the National Pain Services Directory was further evidence of the Morrison Government’s commitment to a healthier Australia.

“Chronic Pain is an escalating health issue and carries a significant economic burden, both for affected individuals and the national health system. The National Pain Services Directory will make it easier for people to access more than 200 pain treatment services, and ensure they are able to receive treatment that is appropriate and effective for their needs” Minister Hunt said.

Pain is closely associated with other health conditions, mental health and disability. Nearly 1.45 million (44%) people in pain also live with depression and anxiety. Limited awareness of good options to deal with chronic pain means many of these Australians are falling through the cracks of the country’s health system. This Directory will offer critical information for those in pain.

Sarah Fowler (22) has lived with chronic pain for half her life. Ms Fowler's chronic pain saw her confined to a wheelchair for six months when she was 10. ***“For two years, I was told by doctors that my pain was in my head. That was until I was admitted in agony to Sydney Children's Hospital while on holidays. Only then did I get an answer and realised I had probably had persistent chronic pain since early childhood. Over the years, I have had to take monthly - and eventually yearly - trips to a treatment centre in Sydney undergoing a regime of physiotherapy, medication, hydrotherapy and cognitive therapy. Now finally with the right access to multidisciplinary pain support, I have the tools to manage my pain independently. This tool is invaluable to others like me who need to find support”*** Ms. Fowler said.

Australian Pain Society President Dr Anne Burke said ***“ensuring timely access to high quality, multidisciplinary care is essential for the large number of people who are living with chronic and persistent pain in Australia. People need the right care, as close to their home as possible, so that they can get back into the driver’s seat and take control of their lives.”***

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About Painaustralia

Painaustralia is Australia's peak national 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.

National Patron

Air Chief Marshal Sir Angus Houston AK, AFC (Ret'd)

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