



THE
AUSTRALIAN
PAIN SOCIETY



MEDIA RELEASE

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Paediatric pain services in Australia are World Class

Public hospital paediatric pain services in Australia, whilst few, provide world class treatments for children and young people in pain. Media reports have suggested that young people and their families are forced to seek outrageously expensive treatment programs for chronic pain conditions such as Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS) at overseas centres. However, **all Australian public paediatric pain services are expert in the management of CRPS and chronic pain conditions generally.**

According to Dr Mark Alcock, specialist pain medicine physician at Qld Children's Hospital and past chair of the Pain in Childhood Special Interest Group of the Australian Pain Society (APS), "children and young people experiencing chronic pain may also be dealing with issues such as missed learning experiences, trauma, childhood adversity, anxiety, and depression. They often feel alone and misunderstood with their pain."

Dr Susie Lord, NSW specialist pain medicine physician, explained that a child's pain experience inevitably becomes a shared family experience the longer it persists. Dr Lord said parents often comment they feel "helpless" and "desperate"; siblings can feel worried, frustrated, and left out; sadness and tensions overflow at times.

Drs Alcock and Lord strongly recommend **families see their GP and explore local services, including specialist Australian paediatric pain services if needed.** Australian paediatric pain services can be found by searching the National Pain Services Directory.

In **Australian paediatric pain services, children are assessed by a team of experts** who understand chronic pain conditions which young people experience- and support-needs of patients, parents, families, and schools.

For patients in regional and remote locations, outpatient telehealth services are provided in liaison with local health care providers, in addition to face to face care. Dr Alcock says that providing improved care to those in regional and rural areas "is not as simple as building more pain services". He goes on to say that "applying a biopsychosocial model which views pain as a health and well-being issue and investing in the growth and integration of multidisciplinary care across health, disability, education and social services will improve the care provided to children and young people with pain".

Immediate Past President of the Australian Pain Society, Trudy Maunsell, said that innovations such as the imProVing Persistent Pain in Youth in QLD 'PIPPY' Project, (based on the "Best Care Close to Home Child and Youth Persistent Pain Strategy" Report 2021) are examples of how state government and

paediatric pain clinicians were working to increase community awareness, understanding and knowledge about children and young people with pain. This work can help to increase clinician's and service's confidence and skills in providing best practice care to children and young people with chronic pain. Another example is [YoungPainHEALTH](#), an online program co-designed with young people, offering credible and practical information, tips, and skills to help young people to manage their pain and improve their quality of life.

About the Australian Pain Society

The Australian Pain Society is a multidisciplinary association whose purpose is to advance pain management through education, research, and advocacy for transformational improvements in clinical care. Our national membership is drawn from over 40 health disciplines covering a variety of medical, nursing, and allied health perspectives. The APS Pain in Childhood Special Interest Group aims to share and improve professional and scientific knowledge regarding pain through all phases of development from birth to transition into adulthood.

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