



THE
AUSTRALIAN
PAIN SOCIETY

APS Guiding Principles for Pain Management

Pain is best understood and managed through a biopsychosocial framework, and an assessment process identifying these pain contributors is essential.

The literature into the treatment and management of pain conditions consistently demonstrates that approaches addressing biopsychosocial contributors are more likely to be successful. In some circumstances, a sole clinician may be able to address the breadth of pain contributors. However, interdisciplinary care provided by a multidisciplinary team is the gold standard for the management of pain, particularly in persistent pain, and is always recommended. The literature also shows that treatment approaches focusing **only** on reducing pain intensity are less likely to be successful than those also addressing pain-related distress and disability. A multidisciplinary team approach is more likely to deliver outcomes sought by the person experiencing pain.

Interdisciplinary care is more than simply having multiple professions. Rather, it is the integration of knowledge, collaboration and shared expectations and goals by the team that defines its co-ordinated nature. The International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) defines interdisciplinary care as “a biopsychosocial approach to assessment and management that involves a team of health care professionals working closely together within a non-hierarchical framework”.

The Australian Pain Society recommends that all pain conditions be managed with treatment approaches aspiring to the provision of interdisciplinary care.

Approved by the Australian Pain Society Board, August 2017

Reviewed and approved by the Australian Pain Society Board, August 2024

Weblink: <https://www.apsoc.org.au/position-papers>
