

## 10 STEPS FOR MOVING FORWARD WITH PAIN MANAGEMENT

1. **Accept the pain** – learn all you can about your physical condition. Understand that whilst there may be no current cure for the pain, you will be able to deal with it in your life.
2. **Get involved** – take an active role in your own recovery. Build up a partnership role with your health care professionals.
3. **Learn to set priorities** – look beyond the pain to things that are important in your life. List the things you'd like to do that can help you start to resume an active life.
4. **Set realistic goals** – make them within your power to accomplish or break a large goal into manageable steps. Take time to enjoy your success.
5. **Know your basic rights** – to be treated with respect, say no without feeling guilty, make mistakes, have no need to justify your actions.
6. **Recognise emotions** – emotions directly affect our physical well-being. Acknowledge and deal with your feelings so you can reduce stress and decrease pain.
7. **Learn to relax** – relaxation exercises can help you reclaim control of your body. Deep breathing, visualisation and guided imagery can help you manage the pain you live with.
8. **Exercise** – identify a safe exercise programme to build your strength and improve your self-esteem.
9. **See the whole picture** – as you have set priorities, reached goals, asserted your basic rights, dealt with feelings, relaxed and regained control you will see that pain does not need to be the centre of your life. Choose to focus on your abilities not your disabilities. Grow stronger in your belief that you can live a rewarding life in spite of your chronic pain.
10. **Reach out** – once you have begun to find ways to manage your pain then reach out and share what you have achieved. Living with chronic pain is an ongoing learning experience. We can all support and learn from each other.