

Toolkit Empowers Chronic Pain Sufferers

'Connections 2014' hosted by the Spinal Cord Injury Network will mark the launch of an online toolkit for people with chronic pain and spinal cord injury, on 13th October at the Royal Randwick Racecourse in Sydney.

With funding from the Lifetime Care and Support Authority of NSW, the ACI Pain Management Network created the online toolkit to help improve the quality of life for the 60% of people living with spinal cord injury who experience chronic pain.

Chronic pain affects around 3.2 million Australians and costs more than \$34 billion to the Australian economy.

The online toolkit will be an easily accessible collection of resources, which include:

- Videos about successful strategies used by people with spinal cord injury to manage chronic pain
- A 'Navigator' decision support tool to guide healthcare professionals through the complexity of chronic pain in spinal cord injury to support the development of a pain management plan
- Complementary resources for consumers, patients and healthcare professionals to work in partnership and produce pain management plans.

Associate Professor James Middleton, Director and Chair of the ACI State Spinal Cord Injury Service, led the toolkit's development with a number of experts in the field. He stressed the importance of self-management in people with chronic pain and spinal cord injury.

"We know the best evidence for the most effective pain management is to arm the person with spinal cord injury and pain with a range of skills and self-management strategies to build into daily life and routines," said Associate Professor Middleton.

HammondCare will also be launching 'The Spinal Cord Injury Pain Book' written by Professor Phil Siddall, Rebecca McCabe, Dr Robin Murray, Associate Professor Kathryn Nicholson Perry, and Lyndall Katte, at Connections 2014.

Connections 2014 will bring together researchers, clinicians, decision-makers and the community in a single interactive forum to discuss spinal cord injury research.

The Spinal Cord Injury Network is an alliance of leading scientists, healthcare professionals, community members and key stakeholders who are working together to improve treatments

and find a cure for spinal cord injury in Australia. Donations are needed to help the Network fund research, advocacy and support.

To access the chronic pain toolkit visit www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain

To register for Connections 2014: www.connections2014.com.au/

For more information about the Spinal Cord Injury Network: www.spinalnetwork.org.au/

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