

Relaxation and Distraction Workshop for 7-12 year old children in chronic pain and their parents.

Children in chronic pain - why is it important?

Chronic persistent pain in children is unrecognised and undertreated; it is a public health concern of major significance. Persistent pain in children does not just affect the child or their family, but it is a significant financial burden to the UK economy. Leicestershire paediatric pain service is a well established multidisciplinary service that caters referrals from wider geographical area all over the Midlands. We see around 100 children per year in this complex MDT clinic; more than 25% of our referrals come from outside our neighbouring counties, explaining the need for these services nationally.

What is this workshop?

We have developed an innovative art and craft based Relaxation and Distraction workshop for children aged 7-12 year old who suffer with chronic pain along with their parents. This workshop is run by multidisciplinary staff with following goals:

- Education of pathophysiology of chronic pain
- Using analogies and metaphors in this education for simple understanding
- Using art and craft as a distraction tool
- Relaxation by means of breathing exercises
- Distraction strategies
- Use of imagery in pain management
- Use of this to promote health (eating, drinking and sleep hygiene)
- Education of parents regarding chronic pain, coping and pacing strategies
- Education of parents of self-awareness and stress management

How is the workshop run?

We include 6 to 8 children who have been selected from our clinic; the workshop is run for a whole day during school holidays. Parents attend the workshop along with these children. Two Paediatric Specialist Nurses and a Paediatric Physiotherapist are part of the workshop while outcome is measured by Paediatric Psychologist and overall governance is managed by the Pain Consultant.

Use of technology in the workshop

- 'Pain Toolkit' education through the electronic tablets routinely used in our Paediatric service.
- Breathing exercises with 'Breathe2relax' app that is routinely used; this is a free app that could be used with the Trust electronic tablets and the computers.
- "Understanding chronic pain in five minutes" video clip that is routinely used in our service through our Trust electronic tablets and computers; this is a free video clip accessed through the YouTube website.

Pain related outcome measurements

We use standard questionnaires to measure outcome as in our pain management group. We score a very high satisfaction score of more than 99% in our Friends and Family test.

We have been very fortunate to receive the Grunenthal national award for the year 2016 which helps us to fiscally manage this project for three years before approaching our commissioners. Our team was interviewed by the Awards' production team and the video is available to watch at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rbIKa5IFRO>

For further information on paediatric chronic pain, please access *Vasu T Pain News Mar 2016; Vol 14, Issue 1: P 35-37* and contact Dr Thanthullu Vasu, Consultant and Head of Pain Services, University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust at email: thanthullu.vasu@uhl-tr.nhs.uk