

New Parliamentary group to advance pain management

Painaustralia is delighted to announce the establishment of the new Parliamentary Friends of Pain Management group of the Federal Parliament.

Painaustralia Chairman Professor Ian Chubb welcomed the new group; ***“this is a clear indication that federal parliamentarians understand the significant impact that chronic pain has on our community. It is wonderful to see the strong bi-partisan support and I would like to thank each and every one of the members of this group for their enthusiastic response to the invitation. This group and its members will promote more discussion in the halls of parliament about practical solutions to addressing the needs of the 3.37 million Australians living with pain. I am optimistic we will see great progress on this front.”***

The Parliamentary Friends of Pain Management Group will be co-chaired by [The Hon David Smith MP](#) and [Senator Wendy Askew](#).

Painaustralia’s CEO, Carol Bennett said ***“with the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic together with [recent changes to availability of pain medications](#), people living with chronic pain are doing it tough. It is important that some of our community’s most disadvantaged people are placed at the centre of national health discussion and we are in a position as a nation to provide national leadership to this major health challenge.”***

New and emerging evidence continues to highlight the [significant potential for an increase in chronic pain](#) after the COVID-19 pandemic. ***“Nearly [70 percent of people living with chronic pain are of working age and almost 50 percent](#) also live with mental health conditions like anxiety and depression. This condition exacts an enormous toll,”*** Ms Bennett said.

“We know that if our policy framework to treat pain doesn’t change, then the annual cost of pain in Australia will rise from [\\$140 billion to over \\$215 billion by 2050](#). Importantly, this modelling by Deloitte Access Economics was done before we factored in the additional impost of the COVID-19 pandemic,” Ms Bennett said.

Painaustralia was funded by the Australian Government to develop the [National Strategic Action Plan for Pain Management](#) which was launched in 2019. The Plan outlines the key actions that Australia should take to tackle chronic pain. It is currently before Australia’s health ministers for approval.

“I am confident that the political leadership of this group will make a difference in the lives of millions of Australians living with chronic pain, their families and carers and the communities they contribute to. Painaustralia thanks our co-chairs and each of the parliamentarians who have signed up to support a strategic national approach to managing chronic pain,” Ms Bennett said.

About Painaustralia

Painaustralia is Australia’s peak national pain advocacy body working to improve the quality of life of people living with pain, their families and carers, and to minimise the social and economic burden of pain on individuals and the community.

National Patron Air Chief Marshal Sir Angus Houston AK, AFC (Ret’d)

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PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDS OF PAIN MANAGEMENT OF THE 46TH PARLIAMENT

Member / Senator	Electorate / State
Wendy Askew	Senator for Tasmania
Helen Polley	Senator for Tasmania
Catryna Bilyk	Senator for Tasmania
Deborah O'Neill	Senator for NSW
David Smith MP	Bean, ACT
Celia Hammond MP	Curtin, WA
Matt Keogh MP	Burt, WA
Luke Gosling MP	Solomon, NT
Emma McBride MP	Dobell, NSW
Alicia Payne MP	Canberra, ACT
Bridget Archer MP	Bass, Tasmania
Dr Anne Webster	Mallee, NSW
Maria Vamvakinou MP	Callwell, Vic
Daniel Mulino MP	Fraser, Vic
Andrew Leigh MP	Fenner ACT
Andrew Lamming MP	Bowman, QLD
Hon Amanda Rishworth MP	Kingston, SA
Fiona Martin MP	Reid, NSW
Fiona Phillips MP	Gilmore NSW
Nicolle Flint MP	Boothby, SA
Senator Louise Pratt	Senator for WA
Dr Mike Freeland	MacArthur NSW