

COMMUNIQUE - NATIONAL PAIN STRATEGY ROUNDTABLE HOSTED BY PAINAUSTRALIA

THURSDAY 21 JUNE 2018

AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA

Painaustralia recently led a Roundtable of eminent health experts to stocktake progress since the 2010 National Pain Strategy and assess and prioritise core components for the development of a new National Action Plan on Chronic Pain Management (NAP). The new NAP will set out a roadmap for the next three years to address Australia's pain burden.

Co-facilitated by ABC Health Reporter Sophie Scott and Rosie Yeo, leaders from pain medicine, allied health, drug and addiction medicine, mental health, rural health, general practice, pharmacy, rheumatology and consumer health came together and agreed that the National Pain Strategy sets out a clear framework for best practice pain management and provides the guiding principles for the NAP.

With a truly national approach that leverages investment and reform, the Roundtable found Australia could stem the tide on its chronic pain burden and build on progress made since 2010 that has brought about a more skilled health workforce and improvement in the quality of pain services.

Roundtable members set out a vision that sees chronic pain upheld as a key national health priority by 2021, addressed through a national strategy that supports:

- Empowered and resilient consumers;
- Knowledgeable practitioners, with effective pain management plans coordinated at the primary health level;
- A reduction the prescribing of pain medications; and
- Better access to interdisciplinary care by harnessing technology and research.

While progress has been made in recent years, the Roundtable determined much more needs to be done to achieve this vision, particularly to inform consumers, expand access to interdisciplinary care and understand pain and its treatment through better supported and connected research.

The Roundtable highlighted persistent issues including the low level of understanding of pain and its treatment options, ongoing stigma faced by people living with pain and quality use of medicines.

The Roundtable also identified some key emerging issues such as the need to support people with pain to return to work, ensuring our understanding of medicinal cannabis meets community expectations, the increased demand to manage multiple co-morbidities and the needs of specific groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and those from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

The Roundtable agreed that, in the short term, significant benefits lay in pursuing action as a unified sector and by working in partnership with governments and the community on multifaceted communication strategies that equip consumers and health practitioners with evidence-based knowledge. In the longer term, investment and reform that enables more efficient and flexible multidisciplinary care will be required.

The Roundtable was supported and attended by the Minister for Health, Hon. Greg Hunt MP who encouraged leaders to work collaboratively with government in developing the priorities for the National Action Plan, all the while focusing on consumer outcomes.

The Roundtable was the first step towards developing the National Action Plan for Chronic Pain Management, which will be developed by Painaustralia. Further consultation opportunities will be made available in the coming months to inform the development of the Plan.



ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

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Dr Meredith Craigie, Dean-elect, Faculty of Pain Medicine

Ms Fiona Hodson, President, Australian Pain Society

Assoc. Prof Malcolm Hogg, Painaustralia Director

Assoc. Prof Adrian Reynolds, President Australasian Chapter of Addiction Medicine, Royal Australasian College of Physicians

Mr Mark Diamond, CEO, National Rural Health Alliance

Dr Milana Votrubic, Representative, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

Dr Frank New, Representative, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists

Adj Assoc. Prof Debbie Rigby, Director, DR Pharmacy Consulting

Dr Richard Kwiatek, Representative, Australian Rheumatology Association

Ms Leanne Wells, CEO, Consumers Health Forum

Dr Graeme Killer AO, Painaustralia Director

Adj Prof Tim Greenaway, Chief Medical Officer, Therapeutic Goods Administration, Department of Health

Ms Jacinta McDonald, Director, Chronic Disease Policy Section, Department of Health

Mr Robert Regan, Chairman, Painaustralia

Ms Carol Bennett, CEO, Painaustralia

OBSERVERS

Mr Patrick Tobin, Director, Policy and Advocacy, Royal Australasian College of Physicians

Ms Natasha Rees, Marketing Manager, Seqiris

Ms Danielle Dowell, Director of Commercial Operations, Seqiris

Ms Louise Moes, Director of Policy, Painaustralia

FACILITATORS

Ms Sophie Scott, National Medical Reporter, ABC

Ms Rosie Yeo, Public Affairs Network Pty Ltd