

## What can you do to help?

- Please confirm your appointment or let us know if you cannot attend. This helps us to use the clinics more efficiently to keep waiting times as short as possible.
- Please bring a list of current medications, or their containers.
- Please bring your reading glasses if you use them.
- Should I write everything beforehand?  
No. It is better to have a two-way discussion with you to get useful details about your problem.  
But, if you have questions you hope to have answered at the assessment, it can help to write them down!
- Can I bring someone with me? Attending with someone else important in your life, although not essential, can be helpful.
- If you need an interpreter or have any other cultural needs, please notify the clinic when you book/confirm your appointment.

### Locations for appointments:

#### Pain Clinic:

- Medical Outpatients (OP) (Frederick St, Outpatients) Ground Floor, Ward Block  
Or;
- Day Surgery Clinic: Ground Floor, next to ED  
Or;
- 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Outpatients: Cumberland St entrance - take lift to 4<sup>th</sup> floor

Dunedin Hospital: (03) 474 0999

All appointments: (03) 470 9240

Frederick St OP Reception extn 59258  
Day Surgery Reception (03) 474 7974  
Pain Service Secretary (03) 470 9833

All Other Numbers: (03) 474 0999

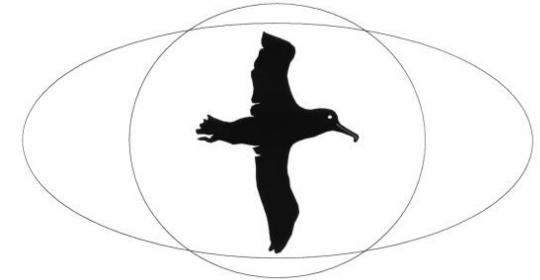
Clinical Nurse Specialist extn 58648  
Clinical Psychology extn 58185  
Physiotherapy extn 58810  
Occupational Therapy extn 59544

### To confirm your appointment:

(03) 470 9240

Leave message for:

## What to expect at your Pain Clinic visit



## Dunedin Hospital

Dunedin Hospital  
201 Great King Street, Private Bag 1921,  
Dunedin, New Zealand.  
Telephone 03 474 0999

Southland Hospital  
Kew Road, PO Box 828  
Invercargill, New Zealand.  
Telephone 03 218 1949

## Introduction

Challenging, persistent pain needs the skills of more than a single professional. This is why, at Dunedin Hospital, we use a team approach.

## What is persistent pain?

We all think we know what pain means, yet it can have different meanings to different people. In most cases, persisting pain is not the same as acute pain, which occurs after an injury. Persistent pain can last for a long time and can affect the whole of a person's life - sleep, work, relationships, recreation, family activities and so on.

## The Multidisciplinary Team

Because persistent pain is a complex problem, you can meet a team of professionals with different backgrounds at your first Pain Clinic appointment. They are used to helping people deal with persistent pain. In Dunedin, the assessment team can include an anaesthetist, clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, nurse, occupational therapist and physiotherapist. Sometimes there are dental staff and trainees/students present.

At times, a single team member will make an initial assessment and give preliminary advice. Arrangements for others in the team to assess you can follow.

## A typical assessment

Team members usually meet you as a group to avoid duplication of questions, but sometimes it can only be done individually. We will get a detailed history of your pain problem. This involves many questions so we can try to fully understand what is happening for you, including the impact on your life, work, and family and recreational activities.

You will then be examined by some of the team members. Because pain can radiate/refer to other areas of your body, or be part of a widespread process, the examination usually includes other areas as well as where you hurt. Wearing suitable clothing can help or you may be asked to put on a patient gown.

We may ask you to fill out questionnaires at different stages following initial consultation or other interventions with the service. This helps us to see if we are meeting your needs.

Team members will discuss and assess the information they gather to be able to advise you on the best advice to offer. You will be asked to sit in the waiting room while this is being done. It helps to bring something to do, e.g. something to read.

After the team discussion, there will be a discussion with you of their assessment of the problem and options to help you manage your pain. Your input is an important part of that

discussion - after all, it is your problem and the more you understand it, the better equipped you will be to carry out suggestions and move forward.

## How long will it take?

A full assessment and explanation **usually takes up to two hours** - so allow enough time so that this can be done fully.

## Follow-up visits

It is common to see you again, unless it is agreed between you and the team at the initial assessment that it is not necessary, or you do not wish to. A shorter time is usually scheduled for follow-up visits; usually 15 - 30 minutes.

## Treatment

Any proposed treatment will be discussed with you. Help may come from a range of measures, rather than a single treatment.

**You do not have to undergo any treatment if you don't want to.**

## Any other considerations?

You may have particular needs that we may not be aware of, e.g. religious, gender, cultural concerns, or other factors such as sensory impairment (e.g. hearing, vision). Please contact us if there is anything we need to know.

**See over page for what you can do to help.**