

IEHP Center Of Excellence For Chronic Pain

An Integrated Multidisciplinary Pain Program

The Multidisciplinary Pain Program (MPP) concept is based on the biopsychosocial model for treatment of chronic pain. This model best illustrates the complex and dynamic interactions between physiological, psychological, and social factors that serve to perpetuate and potentially worsen the pain experience in patients. The goal of a Multidisciplinary Pain Model is to restore physical and emotional functioning and improve overall quality of life, in contrast to the Biomedical Model, which emphasizes reduction of pain level as its main goal of therapy. The biomedical approach has severe limitations and often fails to adequately help chronic pain patients. Overall MPP is the most cost-effective strategy for the treatment of chronic pain patients. Further it is associated with minimal adverse complications compared to treatment approaches based on a biomedical model of pain (e.g., surgery, long-term opioid therapy).

The IEHP Center of Excellence further integrates traditional methods of treatment for chronic pain and associate co-morbidities (acupuncture, naturopathic medicine, Tai Chi, nutritional advise) with state of the art modern medicine.

The program is structured into two Phases: A first step (one month in duration) with more intense patient involvement (at least one visit per week) and a second step (following five months), with mandatory monthly visits and a variety of programs offered to the patients.

The treatment modalities are organized into five departments, which provide their individual services within an overarching structure. The departments of the Center of Excellence are:

- 1. Medical Treatment**
- 2. Behavioral Therapy**
- 3. Physical Reconditioning**
- 4. Alternative Treatments**
- 5. Education**

Each visit is typically between three to four hours long and organized in a way that allows the patients to go through the different departments in a single day. An educational part is followed by individual or group sessions, where the patients rotate through each discipline for treatment. Since the Center of Excellence has dedicated space, the patient is guided from room to room to receive their treatments. After each treatment group the staff gets together for a meeting where the individual patients are discussed and the future individual treatment plan is optimized.

Program Components

Medical Treatment

- Initial evaluation of the patient and diagnostic workup
- Selection of an appropriate treatment algorithm and coordination with other modalities
- Medication management
- Interventional treatments, i.e. injections
- Patient education about the nature and prognosis of pain condition.

Behavioral Therapy

- Addresses psychosocial aspects of patient care
- Opioid Risk Assessment
- Opioid Risk Monitoring
- Support Groups (Fibromyalgia, Chronic Musculoskeletal Pain etc.)
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Operant Behavioral Therapy (OBT)
- Stress management training

- Relaxation, progressive muscle relaxation
- Biofeedback
- Assess, diagnose and treat psychological co-morbidities (e.g., depression, anxiety)
- Help patient recognize and address maladaptive responses to pain
- Skill training (e.g., problem solving)
- Individual or group psychotherapy
- Educational component is an integral part of this treatment modality.

Physical Reconditioning

- Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment (OMT) - manual treatment and educational modalities to address myofascial and skeletal pain syndromes caused by bio-mechanical or postural abnormalities (i.e., leg length discrepancy, work-place ergonomics, posture)
- Physical Therapy (PT) and/or Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Graduated activity exposure (pacing) - enables patients to control exacerbations in pain by learning to regulate their activity and, once a regimen of paced activity is established, to gradually increase their activity level to graded therapeutic exercises to increase overall function. (e.g., flexibility, range of motion, posture, body mechanics, ambulation, gait training, core strength/stability, cardiovascular fitness)
- Passive modalities (e.g., ultrasound, electrical stimulation, massage)
- Educating patients about management of pain independently
- Stretching and core strengthening exercises
- Pool therapy
- Feldenkrais: A somatic educational system that aims to reduce pain or limitations in movement, to improve physical function, and to promote general well-being by increasing the patient's kinesthetic and proprioceptive self-awareness of functional movement and by expanding their movement repertoire
- Job analysis and reconditioning
- Educational component is an integral part of OMT and physical therapy, (e.g., spine education, home exercise training, ergonomic training, neurophysiology education)

Alternative Treatments

- Acupuncture
- Chiropractic care
- Naturopathic/homeopathic treatments

Education

- Improved personal management of the chronic pain is the focus of the Educational component.
- Aims to reduce medication and health care utilization overuse (office visits, ED visits, hospital visits) in pain crisis situations.