



Gregory Terrace
Rehabilitation

The Back Page

OCTOBER 2007

GREGORY TERRACE REHABILITATION QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Work related upper limb disorders

In a recent edition of *Australian Family Physician* an article by Dr Michael Shanahan (Rheumatologist and Occupational Physician) described work related upper limb disorders (WRULDs) as being amongst the most common workers' compensation claims.

The author notes that upper limb pain is very common, stating that approximately 20% of the general community will complain of pain in the upper limb in any one month period. Statistics are given for 2003 -2004 in South Australia that there were approximately 14000 claims for compensation relating to injuries of the upper limb (36% of all musculoskeletal injuries).

The author comments on classification systems of soft tissue disorders of the upper limb stating that to date there have been various types of classification systems that have been the subject of considerable criticism. The author states that more recently a structured assessment schedule based on criteria developed by Harrington et al has been found to perform satisfactorily.

Shanahan notes that the association between upper limb disorders and work has been the subject of a number of systematic reviews. He comments that the evidence remains limited because of poor quality data, however what appears clear from the literature is that ergonomic, psychological and occupational psychosocial variables may all play roles in the development and maintenance of work related upper limb pain.

Shanahan notes that focussing solely on the affected body part using a biomedical model of disease is unlikely to be sufficient to manage many cases of WRULDs. He notes that where the problem is slow to improve, it is appropriate to consider a biopsychosocial approach to managing the injury.

Shanahan suggests using the Orebro Musculoskeletal Pain Questionnaire (2) in this population of people with WRULDs who are slow to improve. He notes that individuals who may be at risk of developing long term disability can be identified by use of this questionnaire and then appropriate management of psychosocial issues can be then carried out.

Shanahan also notes that there is evidence that workplace assessments that identify incorrect occupational ergonomic and psychosocial factors can reduce work disability duration and

associated costs.

He also notes that workplace-based interventions coupled with active management appear to be most successful when the disability duration is extended.

Shanahan states that pain units and other multidisciplinary services may play an effective role in complex cases.

Shanahan concludes that dealing with patients with WRULDs can be challenging, however he strongly noted that a careful approach with an emphasis on communication and the identification and management of physical, psychological, psychosocial and workplace problems is likely to be the most useful in alleviating distress and minimizing disability.

Melissa Walter

References:

1. Shanahan M E, Jezukaitis P. **Work related upper limb disorders.** *Australian Family Physician* Volume 35 Number 12 - December 2006 Pages 946 to 950
2. Linton SJ, Boersma K. **Early identification of patients at risk of developing a persistent back problem : the predictive validity of the Orebro Musculoskeletal Pain Questionnaire (OMPQ).** *Clin J Pain* 2003; 19:80-6

Selecting Patients for a Work Hardening / Pain Management Program

The Orebro Musculoskeletal Pain Screening Questionnaire (OMPSQ) was initially proposed by Linton and Boersma (2003) as a tool to identify patients with musculoskeletal pain who were at risk of developing long term disability.

Several studies (Dunstan et.al., 2005; Stover et.al., 2007 and Jellema et.al., 2007; Margison and French 2007) have validated the OMPSQ as a useful predictor of workers who are at increased risk of long term disability.

Margison and French (2007) concluded that the OMPSQ can "facilitate clinical decision making through early identification of individuals likely to fail a unidisciplinary physical therapy program and who may benefit from more complete biopsychosocial treatment".

At Gregory Terrace Rehabilitation we have been monitoring the Orebro scores of patients referred to our multidisciplinary Work Hardening / Pain Management Program.

The mean Orebro score is 131 with a standard deviation of 37

(n = 354). Eighty-four percent of patients referred to our program have an Orebro score above the cut off score of 105 which classifies individuals at high risk of developing long term disability due to psychosocial factors.

Ian McKenzie

References:

- Dunstan DA, Covic T, Tyson GA, Lennie IG. **Does the Orebro Musculoskeletal Pain Questionnaire predict outcomes following a work-related compensable injury?** *Int J Rehabil Res* 28 (4) : 369-70 2005 Dec
- Jellema P, van der Windt DAWM, van der Horst HE, Stalman, Wim AB, Bouter LM. **Prediction of an unfavourable course of low back pain in general practice : comparison of four instruments.** *Br J Gen Pract* 57 (534) : 15-22 2007 Jan

Linton SJ, Boersma K. **Early Identification of patients at risk of developing a persistent back problem : The predictive validity of the Orebro Musculoskeletal Pain Questionnaire.** *Clinical Journal of Pain* 19 (2): 80-86 Mar - Apr 2003

Marginson DA, French DJ. **Predicting treatment failure in the subacute injury phase using the Orebro Musculoskeletal Pain Questionnaire : An observational prospective study in a workers' compensation system.** *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 49 (1) : 59-67 Jan 2007

Stover B, Wickizer TM, Zimmerman F, Fulton-Kehoe D, Franklin G. **Prognostic factors of long-term disability in a workers' compensation system.** *J Occup Environ Med* 49 (1) : 31-40 2007Jan

Gregory Terrace Rehabilitation is now offering a service to patients with chronic shoulder pain.

The **Shoulder Program** runs for two weeks and is designed to help patients who:

- **have not responded to conservative treatment**
- **have residual pain and restricted movement several months post-surgery**
- **have identified psychosocial problems**

The emphasis of the program is on education, pain management guidance (in relation to appropriate exercise, posture and activity) and ultimately self-management.

Stephen Boyd is the consulting physiotherapist on the program, and he brings over twenty years of experience treating patients with difficult shoulder conditions.

For further information do not hesitate to contact Gregory Terrace Rehabilitation.

Conference Calendar

CBT : Effective Treatment of Depression, Anxiety, Pain and Stress
30 October 2007

VIBE Hotel - Milsons Point Sydney

PPL Education Services P/L

Contact: Sally Lane-Brittain

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www.ppleducation.com.au

World Congress on Neck Pain
20 to 22 January 2008
California USA

www.neckpaincongress.org

email: congress@cirpd.org

Telephone: 1 604 684 4148

"The Spectrum of Pain"
28th Annual Scientific Meeting
of the Australian Pain Society
(IASP Chapter)

29 March to 02 April 2008

Perth WA DC Conferences

email: aps@dconferences.com.au

www.apsoc.org.au

**2008 Annual Scientific Meeting
of the British Pain Society
(IASP Chapter)**

15 to 18 April 2008

Liverpool UK

meetings@britishpainsociety.org

www.britishpainsociety.org

**27th Annual Scientific Meeting
of the American Pain
Society (IASP Chapter)**

07 to 10 May 2008

Tampa Florida USA

info@ampainsoc.org

www.ampainsoc.org

12th World Congress on Pain
17 to 22 August 2008
Glasgow UK

iaspdesk@iasp-pain.org

Research Update

**Physiotherapy-Based Rehabilitation
Following Disc Herniation Operation:**

Results of a Randomized Clinical Trial

Erdogmus, CB; Resch, KL; Sabitzer, R; Muller, H; Nuhr, M; Schoggl, A; Posch, M; Osterode, W; Ungersbock, K; Ebenbichler, GR. Spine (ISSN: 0362-2436); Volume 32, No. 19, pp. 2041-2049; 2007

A Prospective Clinical Evaluation of Treatment Effectiveness and Patient Satisfaction Following Usual Care Intervention at a Multidisciplinary Pain Centre *Browne, A; Schug, S; French, D; Ray, P.* Pain Medicine (ISSN: 1526-2375); Volume 8, No. 7, pp. 614-614(1); October 2007

Patients' Perceptions of Their Pain Condition Across a Multidisciplinary Pain Management Program: Do They Change and if So Does It Matter? *Moss Morris, R; Humphrey, K; Johnson, MH; Petrie, KJ.* Clinical Journal of Pain (ISSN: 0749-8047); Volume 23, No. 7, pp. 558-564; 2007

Barriers to rehabilitation and return to work for unemployed chronic pain patients:

A qualitative study. *Patel, S; Greasley, K; Watson, PJ.* European Journal of Pain (ISSN: 1090-3801); Volume 11, No. 8, pp. 831-840; 2007

The relation between cognitive factors and levels of pain and disability in chronic low back pain patients presenting for physiotherapy. *Woby, SR; Roach, NK; Urmston, M; Watson, PJ.* European Journal of Pain (ISSN: 1090-3801); Volume 11, No. 8, pp. 869-877; 2007

Cost-Effectiveness of Physical Therapy and General Practitioner Care for Sciatica.

Luijsterburg, PAJ; Lamers, LM; Verhagen, AP; Ostelo, RWJG; vandenHoogen, HJMM; Peul, WC; Avezaat, CJJ; Koes, BW. Spine (ISSN: 0362-2436); Volume 32, No. 18, pp. 1942-1948; 2007

Reduction of Pain-Related Disability in Working Populations: A Randomized Intervention Study of the Effects of an Educational Booklet Addressing Psychosocial Risk Factors and Screening Workplaces for Physical Health Hazards.

Frost, P; Haahr, JP; Andersen, JH. Spine (ISSN: 0362-2436); Volume 32, No. 18, pp. 1949-1954; 2007

What Is Different About Worker's Compensation Patients?: Socioeconomic Predictors of Baseline Disability Status Among Patients With Lumbar Radiculopathy. *Atlas, SJ; Tosteson, TD; Hanscom, B; Blood, EA; Pransky, GS; Abdu, WA; Andersson, GB; Weinstein, JN.* Spine (ISSN: 0362-2436); Volume 32, No. 18, pp. 2019-2026; 2007

Advice for the management of low back pain: A systematic review of randomised controlled trials. *Dianne Liddle, S; Gracey, JH; DavidBaxter, G.* Manual Therapy (ISSN: 1356-689X); Volume 12, No. 4, pp. 310-327; 2007

Psychiatric Comorbidity in Chronic Disabling Occupational Spinal Disorders Has Minimal Impact on Functional Restoration Socioeconomic Outcomes. *Dersh, J; Mayer, T; Gatchel, RJ; Towns, B; Theodore, B; Polatin, P.* Spine (ISSN: 0362-2436); Volume 32, No. 17, pp. 1917-1925; 2007

A systematic review and synthesis of higher quality evidence of the effectiveness of exercise interventions for non-specific low back pain of at least 6 weeks' duration. *Hettinga, Dries M.; Jackson, Anne; Moffett, Jennifer Klaber; May, Stephen; Mercer, Chris; Woby, Steve R.* Physical Therapy Reviews (ISSN: 1083-3196); Volume 12, No. 3, pp. 221-232(12); September 2007

Specific spinal stabilisation exercises in patients with low back pain - a systematic review. *Hauggaard, A; Persson, AL.* Physical Therapy Reviews (ISSN: 1083-3196); Volume 12, No. 3, pp. 233-248; 2007

The psychosomatic aspects of chronic low back pain. *Smite, D; Ancane, G.* International Journal of Rehabilitation Research (ISSN: 0342-5282); Volume 30, No. SUPP/1, pp.

The psychology of chronic pain and its management. *Vlaeyen, Johan W.S.; Crombez, Geert; Goubert, Liesbet.* Physical Therapy Reviews (ISSN: 1083-3196); Volume 12, No. 3, pp. 179-188(10); September 2007

**Future Newsletters / Invitations
will be available**

for distribution by email.

**If you would like this to
happen please email [relle@
gregorytcerehab.com.au](mailto:relle@gregorytcerehab.com.au)**

Date for your Diary

Wednesday 14 November 2007 @ 6 PM

*Pinot by the Pool
Wine Tasting hosted by Bill Ryan*

Our Guest Speaker will be

Stephen Boyd

Physiotherapist

"Rehabilitation after Spinal Surgery"

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