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Self-management of chronic pain in a community setting

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Chronic pain is a major clinical challenge in Scotland and across Europe as a whole. It is estimated that 18% of the population are currently affected by severe chronic pain. In the UK, approximately a third of the population suffers from chronic pain, it affects individuals and their families, and comes at a significant economic cost. More recently it was estimated that people with chronic pain are responsible for almost 5 million GP appointments in the UK by people seeking help and relief from chronic pain and in many cases, they leave without answers and without effective pain relief with a related cost of almost £70 million to the NHS. Pain Association Scotland has continued to provide a high quality staff-led community based service for people burdened with chronic painful conditions. This is because chronic pain is multifactorial, comprising of neuropathic and nociceptive components, based on a bio-psycho-social understanding. To support patients with this condition, the Association has developed appropriate service delivery through collaborative working relationships with health care professionals and extended new joint working opportunities with the majority of Scottish health boards and some in England and North Wales. Such self-management has potential to improve health outcomes in many cases, with patients reporting increases in physical functioning.

Biography

Sonia Cottom is the Director of Pain Association Scotland for three years – a national charity providing self-management training and support for people burdened with chronic pain. She is continuing to underpin the work of the Association through her research work with the University of Oxford (UK). She is a Member of the Institute of Directors (IoD) and recently received the IoD Emerging Director of the Year Award as well as the Sayer Vincent Charity Accounting Award for excellence and has published her work in several healthcare journals.

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