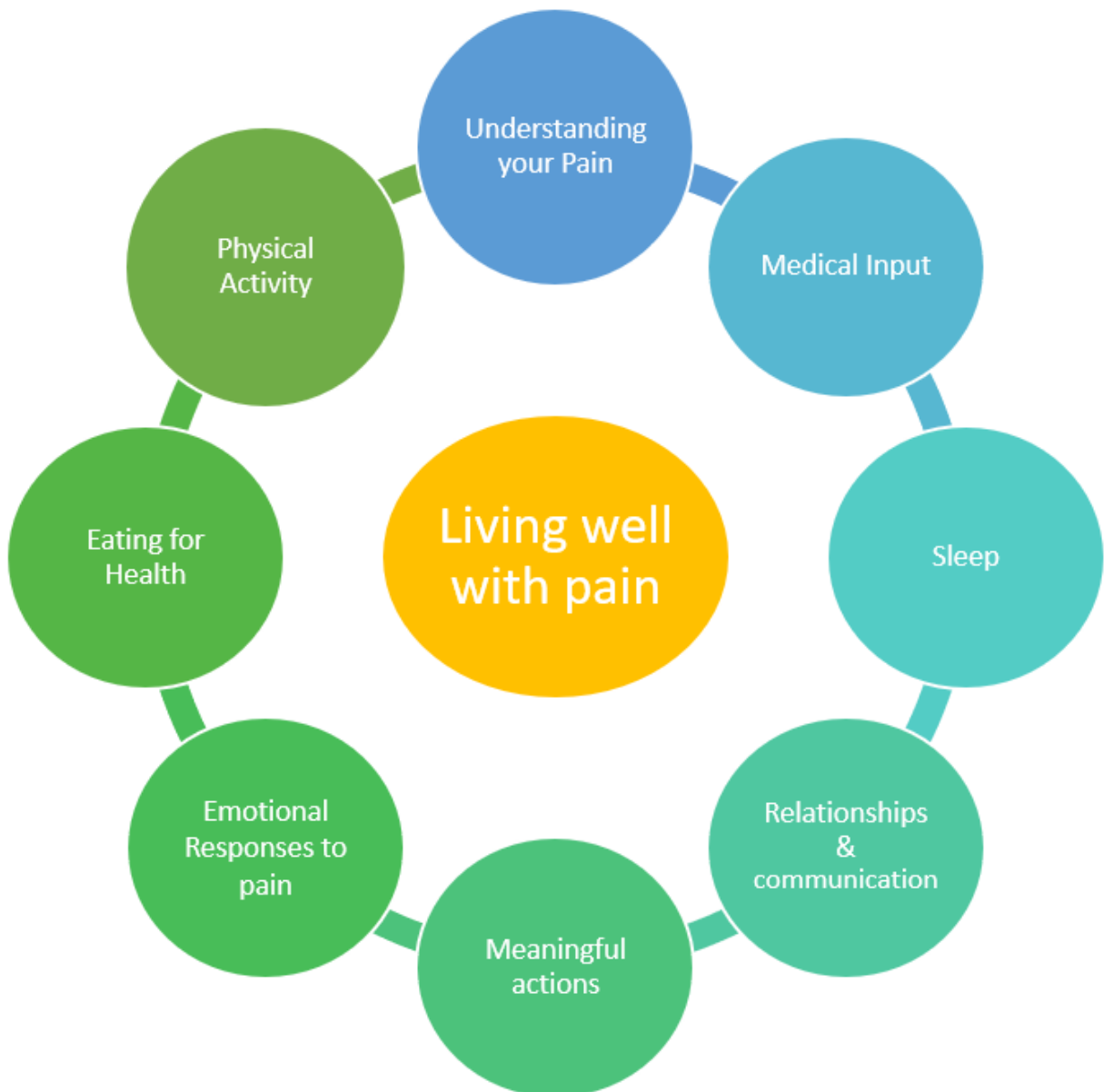




Camden Pain Service (CPS)

Camden Pain Service (CPS) is a multi-disciplinary service consisting of specialists within the fields of medicine, physiotherapy, psychology, nursing, and exercise therapy. Some or all of these different specialists may be involved in your care. The team works closely together to ensure that each patient is supported as best as possible.

Chronic pain can be complex, and it is not always possible to achieve pain relief. Where this is not possible, our aim is to provide appropriate support and advice to help you further develop the ways you manage and cope with your pain. This will be based on your individual needs and can consist of several approaches. We provide care for the whole person focussing on the pillars of pain management.





UNDERSTANDING YOUR PAIN

It is natural to worry about what pain means in the body, why it is there and why it persists. Tests and investigations are often unable to explain pain, and this can be frustrating. We often find that people have found explanations confusing or don't feel they have been believed.

We will listen to your concerns and work with you to understand what is going on in your body and why the pain isn't going away. We have found that when people understand pain better, they are able to move forwards with less worry and become more confident to return to activities that matter to them.



MEDICAL INPUT

Although we understand that everyone would want their pain to be reduced or taken away, for some people that isn't possible. We will review what treatments and medicines you have tried before and consider if others might be useful for you to help manage the pain.

Injections For particular pain conditions injections can help with pain levels for a certain amount of time and may allow to increase your activity levels.

Medications Most people with pain have tried many medications to help reduce their pain. Sometimes this can really help people to function with their long-term pain, but very often we find that people are on many medicines that are not helping and giving side effects. We will work through these with you and help find the right balance of benefit and side effects.



SLEEP

Poor sleep and pain often go hand-in hand, creating a cycle that is hard to break. Many people who are in pain report that they either don't get enough sleep, or that they wake up feeling unrefreshed. A lack of sleep can leave you feeling fatigued, run down and irritable, and your ability to cope with pain reduces. We can, however, change our sleep attitudes and create behaviours that facilitate better sleep.



RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION

Pain can have a significant impact on how people see themselves. This can include struggling with loss or changes in role, not feeling like the person they used to be and impact on confidence. We can help support people to navigate this time of understandable adjustment by introducing skills to help to notice how their mind responds, acknowledgement of emotions in response to pain and finding ways to be kinder and less hard on themselves.

Pain can also have an impact on relationships with others and we know good social contacts can be very important for health and wellbeing. We can support people by helping them to think about their needs and ways of communicating these with other people in their life.



MEANINGFUL ACTIONS

We know that people often lose touch with what is important to them when they have long term pain. We support people to reconnect with what they care about whilst managing difficult barriers such as pain, thoughts and emotions that can get in the way. We do this through practicing different skills and strategies and exploring values and goals. We have helped people get back to travelling, seeing friends and socialising, exercising, work and previous hobbies.



EMOTIONAL RESPONSES TO PAIN

Pain can have a big impact on emotions and thinking— some people feel frustration, anger, sadness, anxious and fearful when they are in pain. People also report that at times of stress their pain symptoms increase. We help people find ways to respond to these difficult feelings using skills such as mindfulness and other techniques.



EATING FOR HEALTH

There is increasing evidence of the benefit of a healthy diet in helping people feel well with long term conditions such as pain. Gut bacteria/organisms are central to health, extracting the nutrients from our food, and can lead to health or illness. A large variety of good bacteria is associated with health and wellbeing.

Choosing a good diet can help how you feel by:

- Reducing inflammation in the body
- Improving the number of 'good' bacteria in the gut



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

We know that there are many benefits of movement but understand that this is difficult when you have pain. Often when we are in pain we avoid activity, however this can lead to joint stiffness, muscle weakness and deconditioning. Although exercise may not help get rid of pain, it will help improve your function, strength, and fitness so you are able to more of what you enjoy again.

There is no evidence that one particular type of exercise is better than any other for persistent pain. The most important thing is that you choose a type of exercise you can manage and enjoy. You may have to start at a lower level than others, but it is normal for all of us to have very different levels of flexibility and fitness.

People sometimes worry that movement will make the pain or condition worse. We will support you to feel safe in making small steps in your activity levels based on your needs.