

## APPENDIX 4

Do you have chronic pain  
& want to return to  
**WORK?**

chronic pain - work - life - balance

Southampton

Returning to work & chronic pain  
**TOOLKIT**

Medicine



centre for  
musculoskeletal  
health & work



UNIVERSITY OF  
**Southampton**

IRAS 226125

# About In STEP

chronic pain - work - life - balance

**Individualised Support To Employment Participation (In STEP)** is a research study that aims to find ways to improve the health of people who are unemployed through chronic pain.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide information about employment services in your local area and also services you can access to help you manage your health condition.

A massive thank you to the patients and staff of Southampton Pain Team who produced this booklet.

NOTE: Call charges may apply when making telephone calls to any of the telephone numbers listed in this booklet.

# Contents

chronic pain - work - life - balance

	Page
About the Toolkit	3
Work & Health	4-5
Support for returning to work (organisations)	6-10
Support for returning to work (action plan)	11-12
Your notes	13-14
Managing chronic pain	15
Managing chronic pain (making changes & becoming active)	16
Managing chronic pain (support & organisations)	17-19
Your notes	20-21

# About the **TOOLKIT**

chronic pain - work - life - balance

The **Returning to Work & Chronic Pain Toolkit** is specifically aimed at individuals who have expressed an interest in returning to work while managing the effects of chronic pain.

The Department of Health for England recognises chronic pain as a long-term condition in its own right and as a component of other long-term conditions. The evidence for work improving health and wellbeing is growing; having the right type of job is good for a person's health and having a job can also make people feel better about themselves.

This toolkit provides useful details of organisations who are best placed to help and advise on managing chronic pain, in addition to information about organisations which can help with the journey of returning to work.


Returning to work can be challenging. However, this booklet aims to make it easier and to provide you with information and motivation to succeed.


The first half of the toolkit provides supportive guidance for returning to work, while the second half focuses on pain management.


# Work & Health


chronic pain - work - life - balance

Work life balance can be difficult to achieve and with chronic pain it can be harder. However, the evidence for work improving health and wellbeing is growing:

 Having the right type of job is good for a person's health.

 Being employed in the right career path can also make people feel better about themselves.

 Many workers recognise that their work makes them feel purposeful and how being part of an organisation can be good for them.

 This is a potential opportunity to regain the feeling of self and achieve purposeful employment once again.



# Support for returning to work





chronic pain - work - life - balance

There are a number of services in Southampton offering work-related guidance and training opportunities. These are listed on the following pages.

Please take some time to think about what you would like to achieve by returning to work and what approach you will take.

You may want a different career as your previous job may no longer be appropriate. Think carefully about how you can get back into work and what job you would be able to do while managing your condition. A career change might be the answer!

## YOU MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

-  Update your CV – how is this best achieved?
-  Work Interviews – what kind of questions will I be asked and how do I prepare?
-  Will I need to disclose any health conditions in the application form?
-  Do I need to retrain in order to change career?


**TIP:** Make a list of everything that you feel you need help with and why. Consider what a reasonable outcome of the help would be. Once you have thought about this, decide which organisation(s) are best placed to help you and then contact them.

# Support for returning to work

## ORGANISATIONS

### SOUTHAMPTON JOBCENTRE PLUS

You can make an appointment with a Work Coach. They are able to help and advise with:

- 
- Job Seekers Allowance
  - Incapacity Benefit
  - Income Support
  - Employment and Support Allowance
  - Universal Credit
  - Training schemes within the city

St Cross House, 18 Bernard Street, Southampton, SO14 2HP

**T:** 0845 604 3719

There are a number of Job Centres in and around Southampton.

### WHEATSHEAF TRUST

This agency is dedicated to helping the most disadvantaged back into work. They offer advice, courses and workshops together with news and contact information.

You are eligible for a FREE one-to-one careers advice session with an Information, Advice and Guidance worker through the National Careers Service at the Wheatsheaf Trust.

Unit 1, Empress Heights, College Street, Southampton, SO14 3LA

**T:** 02380 237662

**F:** 02380 237651

**E:** [info@wheatsheaftrust.org](mailto:info@wheatsheaftrust.org)

**W:** [www.wheatsheaftrust.org](http://www.wheatsheaftrust.org)

**TIP:** When contacting an organisation for help, be clear about what you need. Remember to ask as many questions as you need to fully understand the help being offered and what is expected of you.

# Support for returning to work

## ORGANISATIONS

### LEARNDIRECT

Offers FREE training for Maths, English & IT qualifications. They also have a skills for work programme.

Southampton Study Programme  
1-8 Ogle Road, Southampton, SO14 7FB

**T:** 0345 241 2533

**E:** [tom.barker@learndirect.com](mailto:tom.barker@learndirect.com)

**W:** [www.learndirect.com/centresearch/centre/details/SE04LC181](http://www.learndirect.com/centresearch/centre/details/SE04LC181)

### ACCESS SOUTHAMPTON

Training opportunities for all adults. These are found in the SSDZ area of the website. There is a particular focus on young adults.

**W:** [www.access-southampton.co.uk](http://www.access-southampton.co.uk)

### NATIONAL CAREERS SERVICE

Provides information, advice and guidance to help you make decisions on learning, training and work opportunities. The service offers confidential and impartial advice. This is supported by qualified careers advisers.

**W:** [nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/pages/home.aspx](http://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/pages/home.aspx)

**T:** 0800 100 900

**TIP:** Attending courses can be a way of getting used to working alongside people and being in a group environment again. It could be worthwhile attending courses to boost your confidence.



# Support for returning to work

## ORGANISATIONS

### **SOUTHAMPTON ADVICE AND REPRESENTATION CENTRE (SARC)**

Is a registered independent charity that helps with any aspects of welfare benefits or employment law – from simple form filling to representation at benefit appeals or employment tribunals. SARC is based in Woolston but has various sessions throughout the city.

11 Porchester Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 2JB

**T:** 02380 431435

**E:** [www.sarc.org.uk](http://www.sarc.org.uk)

### **CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

Offers support and guidance on a number of issues including work and benefits. Their website is very comprehensive.

3 Kings Park Road, Southampton, SO15 2AT

**T:** 0844 499 4119

Citizens Advice run a drop-in service Monday to Friday between 10am and 2pm at Southampton City Library, Civic Centre, Southampton, SO14 7LY

**W:** [www.citizensadvice-southampton.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice-southampton.org.uk)











**TIP:** Always be prepared when asking for advice, have all the relevant documents to hand you think you might need. It can be difficult and sometimes intimidating asking for help, but these people are there to help YOU.

# Support for returning to work

## ORGANISATIONS

### SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

Southampton City Council has an Employment Support Team. They offer help, advice and support to people with long term health conditions to find work or training. They can:

-  Talk to you about what kind of work you would like to do.
-  Help you realise what skills and abilities you already have.
-  Help you find the right job.
-  Find training courses.
-  Assist you in looking for jobs and contacting employers.
-  Talk to employers if you are worried about how your health or disability might affect your chances of getting a job.
-  Help you to complete application forms and create a CV.
-  Work beside you in the job to help you learn and settle in if necessary.
-  Give support to access benefit advice.
-  Provide ongoing support and listen to how the job is going if needed.

Eligibility for support depends on certain criteria. Contact the Employment Support Team to find out if you are eligible.

The Employment Support Team currently runs the following work clubs which are open to everyone:

-  Bitterne work club: Bitterne Library every Monday 10am – 2pm
-  Central work club: Southampton Central Library every Thursday 3pm – 5pm

**T:** 02380 917585

**W:** [www.southampton.gov.uk/jobs/employment-support-team.aspx](http://www.southampton.gov.uk/jobs/employment-support-team.aspx)

**E:** [employment.support.team@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:employment.support.team@southampton.gov.uk)

**TIP:** Make the most of all the resources, information and courses available. Try something completely new; you may really surprise yourself and enjoy it. Meeting people in similar circumstances can be inspiring and you could inspire them.

# Support for returning to work

## ORGANISATIONS

### SOUTHAMPTON CITY LIBRARY LEARNING CENTRE

The Learning Centre is at the Central Library on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. They offer IT training including 1 and 3 day courses for both job seekers and the general public. Courses are run on a weekly basis and aimed at all levels of knowledge.

City Library Archives & Information Services, Southampton, SO14 7LW

**T:** 023 8083 2162

**W:** [www.southampton.gov.uk/libraries...library/...libraries/library-computer-courses.aspx](http://www.southampton.gov.uk/libraries...library/...libraries/library-computer-courses.aspx)

### ONLINE GUIDANCE FOR MOVING FROM BENEFITS TO WORK

**W:** [www.gov.uk/moving-from-benefits-to-work/overview](http://www.gov.uk/moving-from-benefits-to-work/overview)

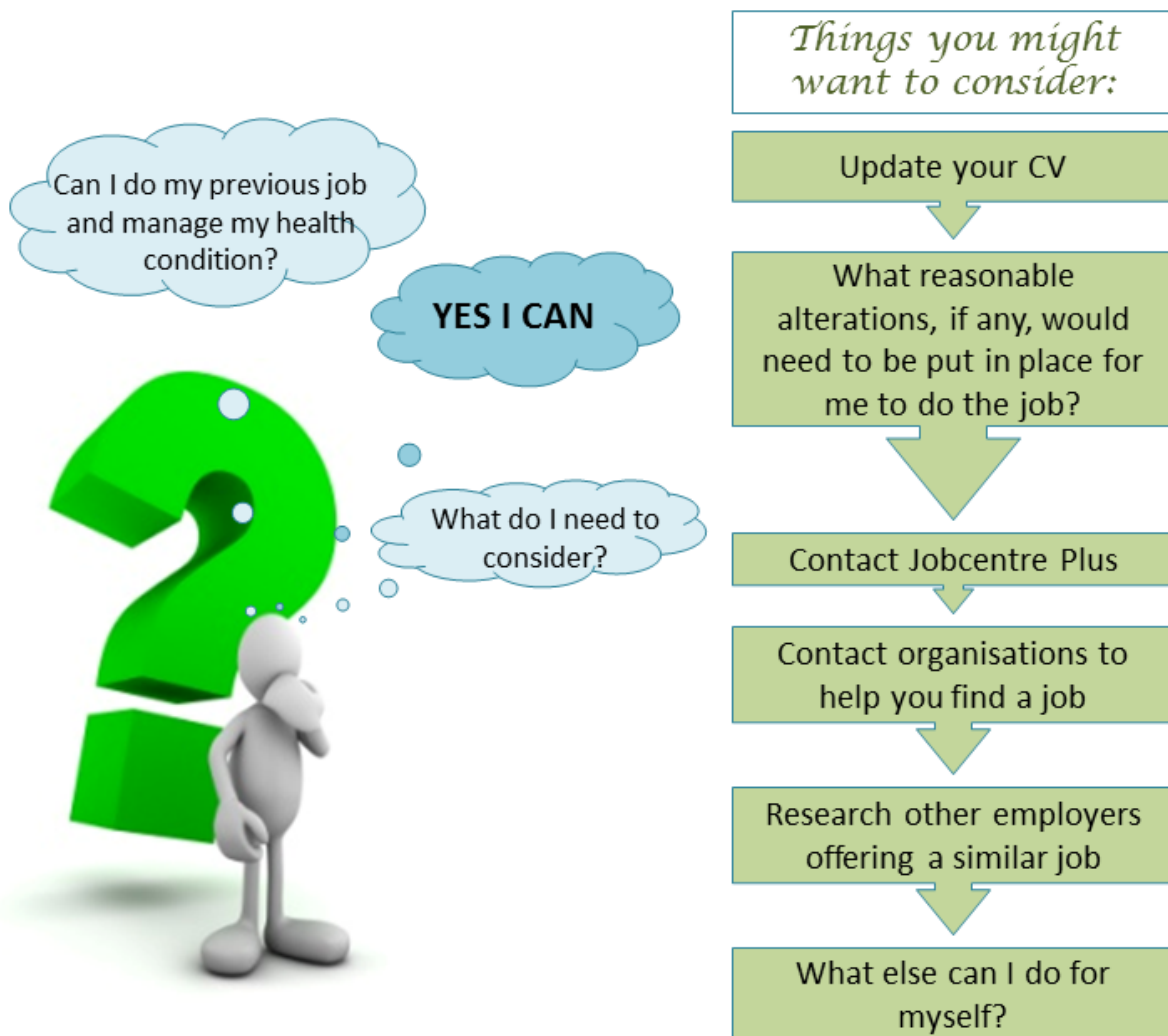
You may find other organisations who offer online or face to face help. The page(s) are left blank at the back of this section so you can make notes and keep track of what you have done.

**TIP:** It is a good idea to write down as much as possible. That way you have something to refer back to. You may want to get a notepad so you can keep track of all your thoughts and information collected from the organisations.

# Support for returning to work

## ACTION PLAN

### I'VE DECIDED I WANT TO RETURN TO WORK

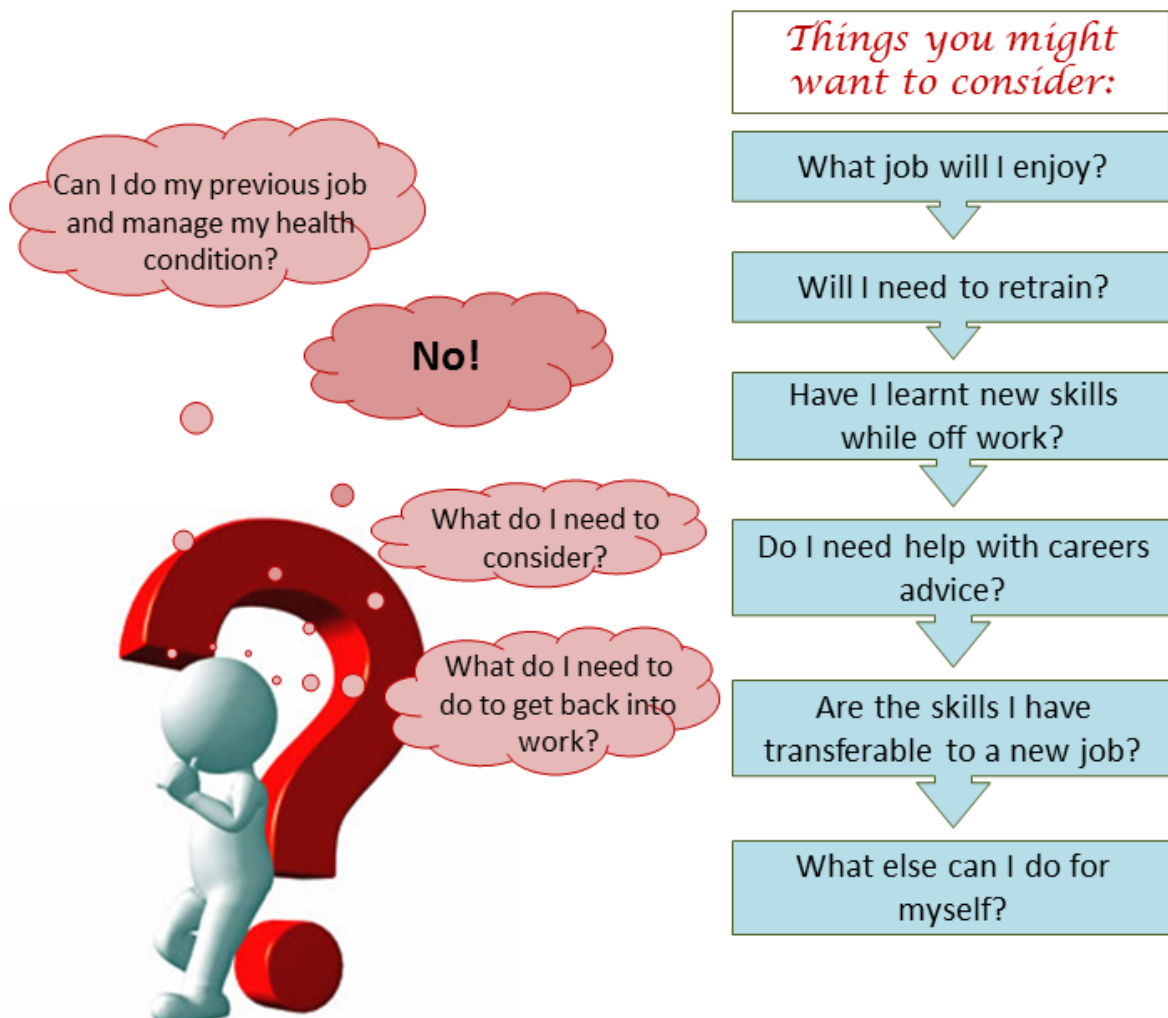


**REMEMBER:** You may have learnt new skills while you have been off work. The experience of managing chronic pain might have enabled you to learn new coping strategies which could be transferred into a new career. You might have taken up a hobby or craft that could also become a career. Consider every option open to you.

# Support for returning to work

## ACTION PLAN

### I'VE DECIDED I WANT TO RETURN TO WORK



**REMEMBER:** You may have learnt new skills while you have been off work. The experience of managing chronic pain might have enabled you to learn new coping strategies which could be transferred into a new career. You might have taken up a hobby or craft that could also become a career. Consider every option open to you.

# Support for returning to work

YOUR NOTES

# Support for returning to work

YOUR NOTES

# Managing Chronic Pain

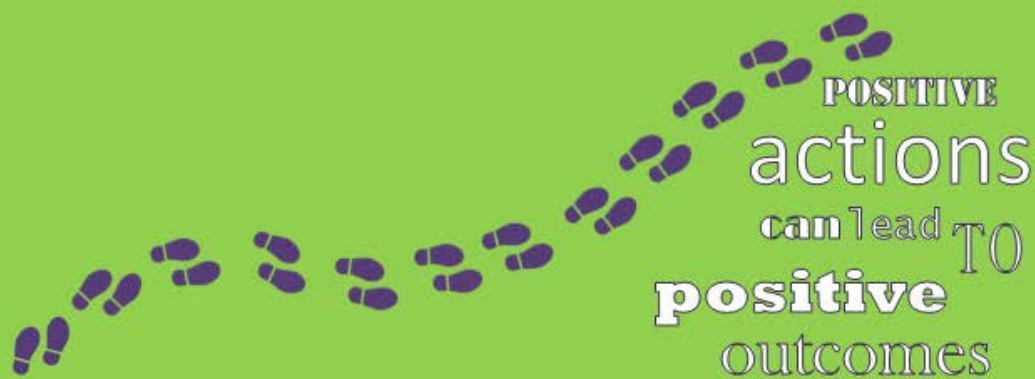
chronic pain - work - life - balance

Managing chronic pain can be testing at the best of times. The challenge is to find what really works for you and how it can be integrated into your everyday life, including work.

In this section you will find details of organisations that are able to support and assist you as well as provide tips on how you can help yourself. You will also find details of support groups and other organisations to help you explore effective pain management strategies.

There are a range of tools, techniques and information available. Finding the right one for you is important as there is not a "one size fits all" answer.

Remember you are not alone. Millions of people in the UK suffer with chronic pain.











# Managing Chronic Pain

## MAKING CHANGES & BECOMING ACTIVE

When suffering from chronic pain, it is advisable to look at all aspects of your life and potentially make changes. It's that old saying:

*"If you always do what you've always done, you will always get what you've always got."*

You might consider looking at and changing:

-  The type of food you eat. Is it healthy?
-  Do you have a regular sleep pattern?
-  Exercise - Do you or are you able to take part in exercise?
-  Pacing – On a good day do you do too much? Do you force yourself to do things on a bad day which could wait?
-  Relaxation – Do you relax? Would learning new relaxation techniques help?
-  Environment – Have you made changes at home that help you deal with the pain, such as having what you need near by?

There are many resources available to you both online and locally for you to make changes that have the potential to help you manage your chronic pain.

You may well find other support groups or organisations who can help you.

**TIP:** If you have a list of questions to which you want the answer, write them down in order of importance. Work through each one individually before moving on to the next. This will give you a sense of achievement and you will not be too overwhelmed.

# Managing Chronic Pain

## SUPPORT & ORGANISATIONS

### KEEPING PACE WITH PAIN (self help group)

Based at The Avenue St Andrews Church, Southampton, the group meets once a month but also has smaller meetings throughout Southampton on a regular basis. This is a friendly support group (with over 100 members) who invites guest speakers to discuss all types of topics. They provide an understanding, friendly and unbiased atmosphere where you can become as involved as you wish.

**W:** [www.keepingpace.co.uk](http://www.keepingpace.co.uk)

### FIBRO FRIENDS SOUTHAMPTON

A Fibromyalgia Support Group which meets fortnightly on Wednesdays 1pm – 3pm at Royal Mail House.

**W:** [www.meetup.com/fibro-friends-southampton](http://www.meetup.com/fibro-friends-southampton)

### LOCAL LIBRARY

Your local library is a good starting point as it holds useful information (access to the internet, books, DVD's, CD's and cassettes etc) about other local health and community initiatives.

### READING WELL FOR LONG TERM CONDITIONS

Reading Well Books on Prescription may help you to understand and manage your condition. The book is available by prescription from your GP or a self-referral. Reading Well Books will also be available on open shelves of public libraries.

**W:** [reading-well.org.uk](http://reading-well.org.uk)

**TIP:** Sometimes the fear of trying something new is greater than actually doing it. Chronic Pain can stop you from trying new approaches BUT nothing ventured, nothing gained.

# Managing Chronic Pain

## SUPPORT & ORGANISATIONS

### PAIN MANAGEMENT TEAM

Your GP may refer you to the pain management team who offer a variety of services including the opportunity to explore and learn new techniques of pain self-management. They can provide you with many self-management tools. To get the best from the programme you need to put in some work and trust yourself and the process.

### NHS PATIENT ADVICE AND LIAISON SERVICE (PALS)

This is an entry point to other possible support services. PALS can provide you with information that may help you locate other services you need. You can contact PALS via your local hospital.

**T:** 023 8087 4065

**E:** [hp-tr.customerexperience@nhs.net](mailto:hp-tr.customerexperience@nhs.net)

**W:** [www.southernhealth.nhs.uk/feedback/customer-experience](http://www.southernhealth.nhs.uk/feedback/customer-experience)

### MEDICATIONS

Your GP is the first point of contact to advise you on medications to help manage the pain.

**TIP:** Think about what would help you help yourself manage the pain effectively. Once you think you know what is needed look at where that help, support or advice could be sourced.

# Managing Chronic Pain

## SUPPORT & ORGANISATIONS

### ONLINE ADVICE

There are MANY useful resources that you can access online; the following are very good:

[www.painconcern.org.uk](http://www.painconcern.org.uk)

Comprehensive information including radio casts you can listen to online.

[www.paintoolkit.org](http://www.paintoolkit.org)

Downloadable information booklet providing handy tips and skills to support you in managing pain along with other helpful online resources.

[www.britishpainsociety.org](http://www.britishpainsociety.org)

Comprehensive information that includes patients publications.

You may benefit from watching a You Tube video which gives a short introduction to pain called "Understanding pain in less than five minutes".

Search: explain pain in 5 minutes.

**TIP:** It could be beneficial to keep a pain diary. This may help you identify what increases the pain as well as what helps soothe the pain. This could also help you identify what makes you feel better and more able to manage the effects of pain.

# Managing Chronic Pain

YOUR NOTES

# Managing Chronic Pain

YOUR NOTES