

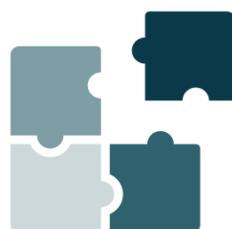
# 5

## facts about physiotherapy and the social determinants of chronic pain



# 1

## Social factors are the missing piece in the chronic pain puzzle



In the biopsychosocial model of chronic pain, social factors should be considered, including:

- individual factors like family and work situations
- broader societal influences and structural determinants of health such as socio-economic status, geographic location, sex, gender, occupation and race.

# 3



## Chronic pain has social consequences

Chronic pain can disrupt an individual's life and identity, causing loss of function, social withdrawal, stigma and diminished social capital. Over time this leads to:

- reduced peer support and lower quality relationships
- negative effects on education, work/employment and income
- uneven distribution of consequences, especially for marginalised populations.

# 5

## A social lens on pain has implications for practice and policy

Improving chronic pain outcomes means advocating for policy changes, improving education on the social determinants of health and promoting equitable practice. Physiotherapists can:

- use social screening tools and open-ended questions to identify risk factors
- refer to social work and community resources when appropriate
- consider group-based or community programs to build support networks.



# 2



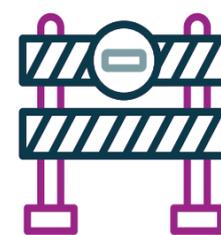
## Social determinants of chronic pain exist at multiple levels

Social determinants can affect chronic pain on interpersonal, group and societal levels:

- personal relationships can buffer or exacerbate pain experiences
- social isolation and loneliness are risk factors for increased pain and worse functional outcomes
- family dynamics, peer networks and work environments play vital roles
- economic, political and cultural systems create unequal exposure to chronic pain risk.

# 4

## Social factors affect access to and outcomes of pain treatment



Barriers to effective pain management include:

- geography, especially for rural and remote communities
- affordability
- health literacy
- discrimination against women, racial minorities and other marginalised groups.

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