# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Launch of refreshed Living with Persistent Pain guidance** |
| **DATE** | **18 September 2023** |
| **BY** | **Eluned Morgan, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

Persistent pain can affect anyone of any age, at any time and is one of the most common presenting symptoms in primary and secondary healthcare. It is estimated between 33% and 50% of the adult population in the UK live with some form of persistent pain, which equates to as many as 1.3 million people in Wales. These conditions which can have a serious effect on mental health, ability to work and relationships with friends and family.

In 2019, the Welsh Government co-produced and published the Living with Persistent Pain in Wales guidance. Since its publication we have received positive feedback on the use of the document as a tool to support people living with persistent pain and health professionals in planning of their persistent pain management services across Wales.

It is important that people who live with these conditions, their families, carers, employers, and those who work within persistent pain services are equipped with the latest information regarding the different approaches people can undertake to manage their pain. As such, we have worked closely with the Persistent Pain Operational Delivery Network, a group made up of a range of professional representatives, to refresh the guidance to reflect new approaches to healthcare services, direction of policy and legislation that has been introduced to healthcare in Wales.

This refreshed guidance replaces the 2019 version. The new Living with Persistent Pain guidance can be found here: [People experiencing persistent pain: guidance](https://www.gov.wales/people-experiencing-persistent-pain-guidance)

The 2023 version provides greater clarity on the recommended actions for the NHS to improve pain services and support non-specialist staff to understand the various management options available. This includes supported self-management, improving awareness of persistent pain for primary care staff and the public, advising on the range of management techniques and online tools available, and improved information sharing. The Persistent Pain Operational Delivery Network will support health boards to implement the recommendations in this guidance as part of the NHS Executive’s new clinical network arrangements.

I would like to thank all members of the Persistent Pain Operational Delivery Network and those who have supported for their hard work in the preparation of this guidance, which I am pleased to publish today and launch at the inaugural Living Well with Persistent Pain national conference.