

CHART A COURSE

Big gain for patients in pain

Course Graduate certificate in pain management.

Given that most healthcare professionals see pain as a symptom, their first action when working to fix it is to find the cause.

The director of postgraduate pain education at the University of Sydney Pain Management Research Institute, Professor Michael Nicholas, says that's entirely appropriate "in the first instance". "The problem arises when pain persists beyond the period of normal healing [chronic pain]; you then need to look at what is contributing to its maintenance."

Given that chronic pain in Australia costs more than \$34 billion a year, a multidisciplinary approach to pain management can pay off.

The graduate certificate in pain management (which segues to a graduate diploma or master's degree) targets health professionals – doctors, dentists, psychologists, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and others – who deal with people in pain.

Cost \$11,520 (local students).

Duration One-year part time for four core units, plus electives.

Time About 15 hours a week for two units, depending on the time of semester and self-study approach.

Where Online via University of Sydney.

When Semester one and two of each academic year.

SUE WHITE