

Pain and Poverty

Experiences from clinical practice

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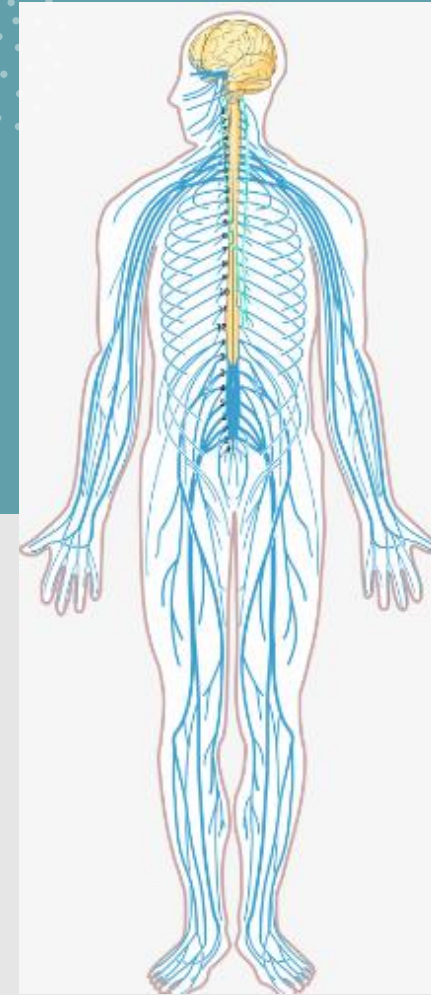
Introduction

Chronic Pain in health psychology clinical practice

How poverty and deprivation impact on pain and pain management

What people value in our interventions

What that tells us – how to make a lasting difference?



Chronic Pain

Pain is “an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience, associated with, or resembling that associated with, actual or potential tissue damage.”

International Association for the Study of Pain, 2020

- Persistent
- Lasting 12 weeks or more
- Not fully explained by physical damage
- Complex factors involved
- Classifications
 - Chronic Primary Pain
 - Chronic Secondary Pain

Prevalence of chronic pain - England

15.5 million people affected (34%)

5.5 million have 'high impact' chronic pain (12%)

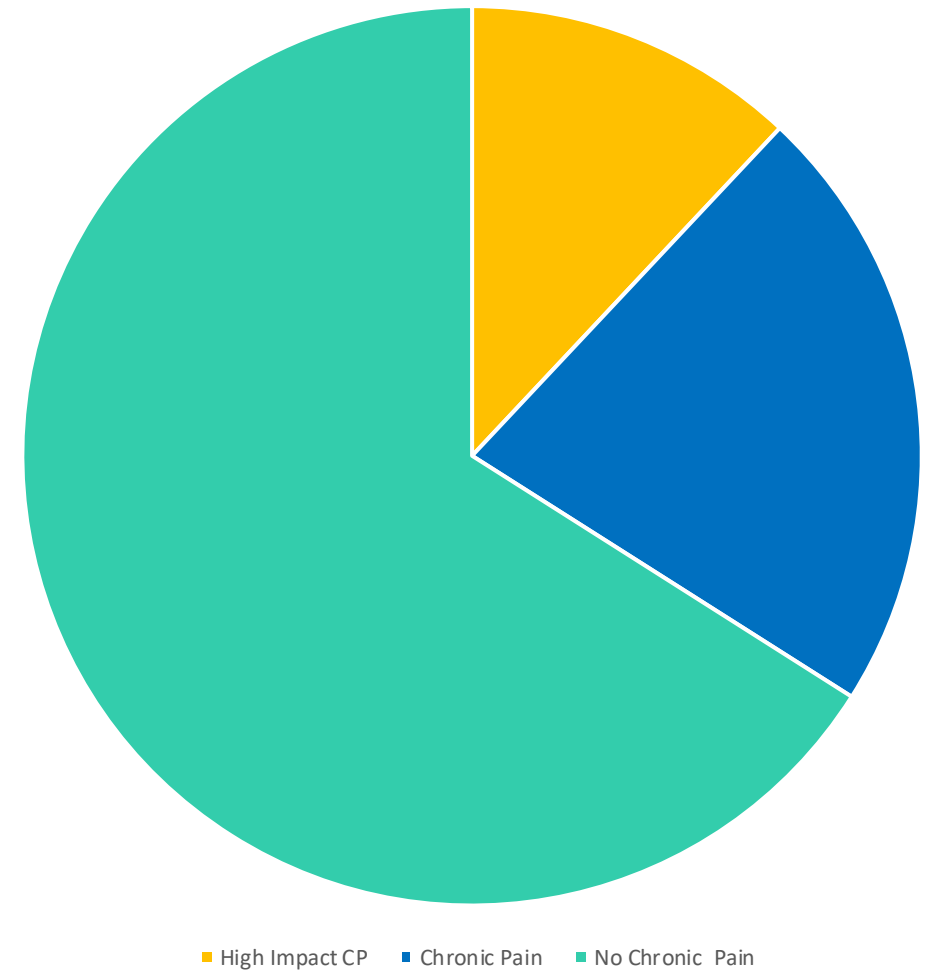
Most common reason to visit GP

Mostly "related to" musculoskeletal conditions

Increasing in younger age groups (from 2011 to 2017)

Source: Versus Arthritis (2021). *Chronic Pain in England: Unseen, Unequal, Unfair*

Chronic Pain in England 2017

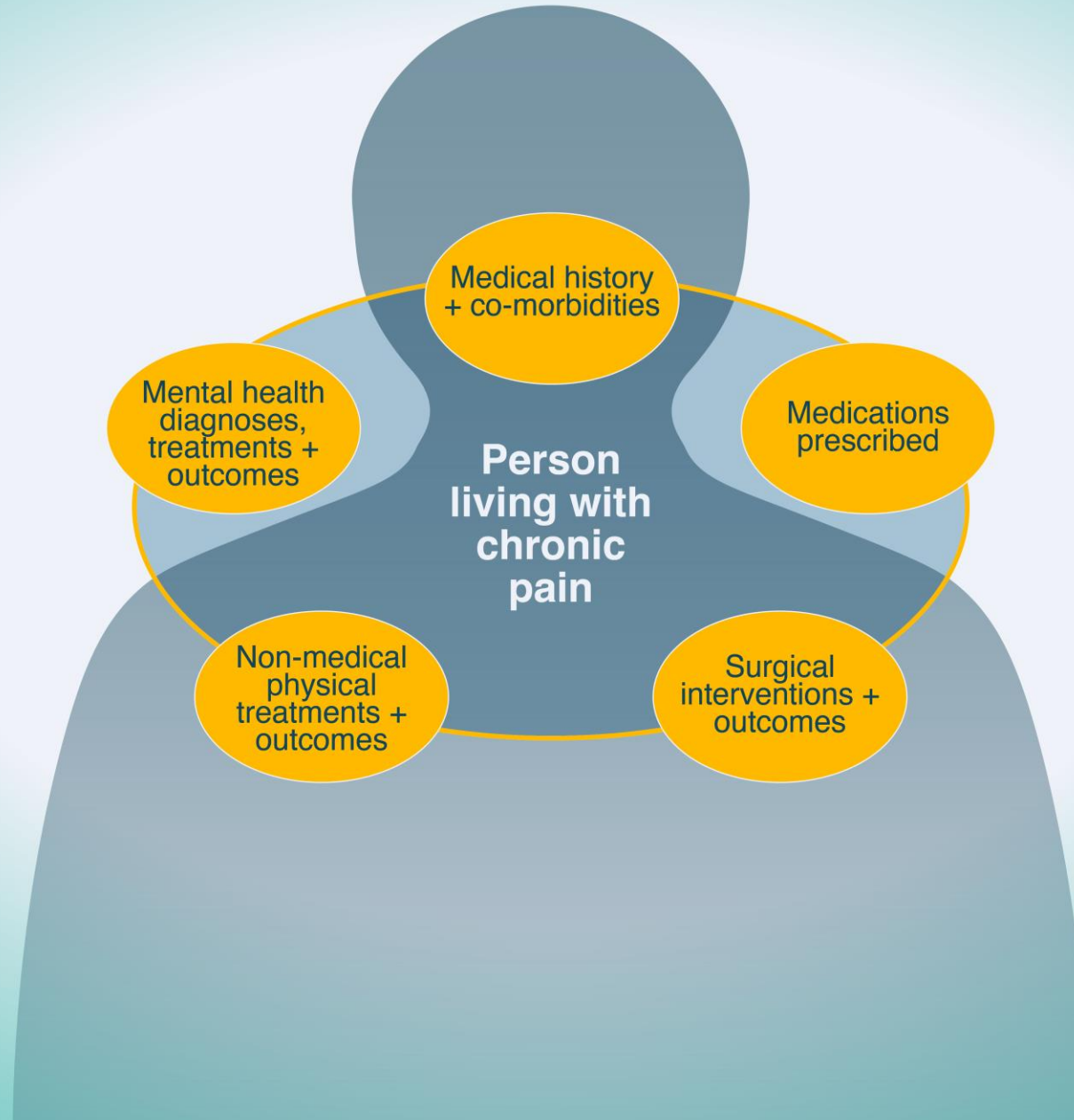


What we can learn from clinical assessment

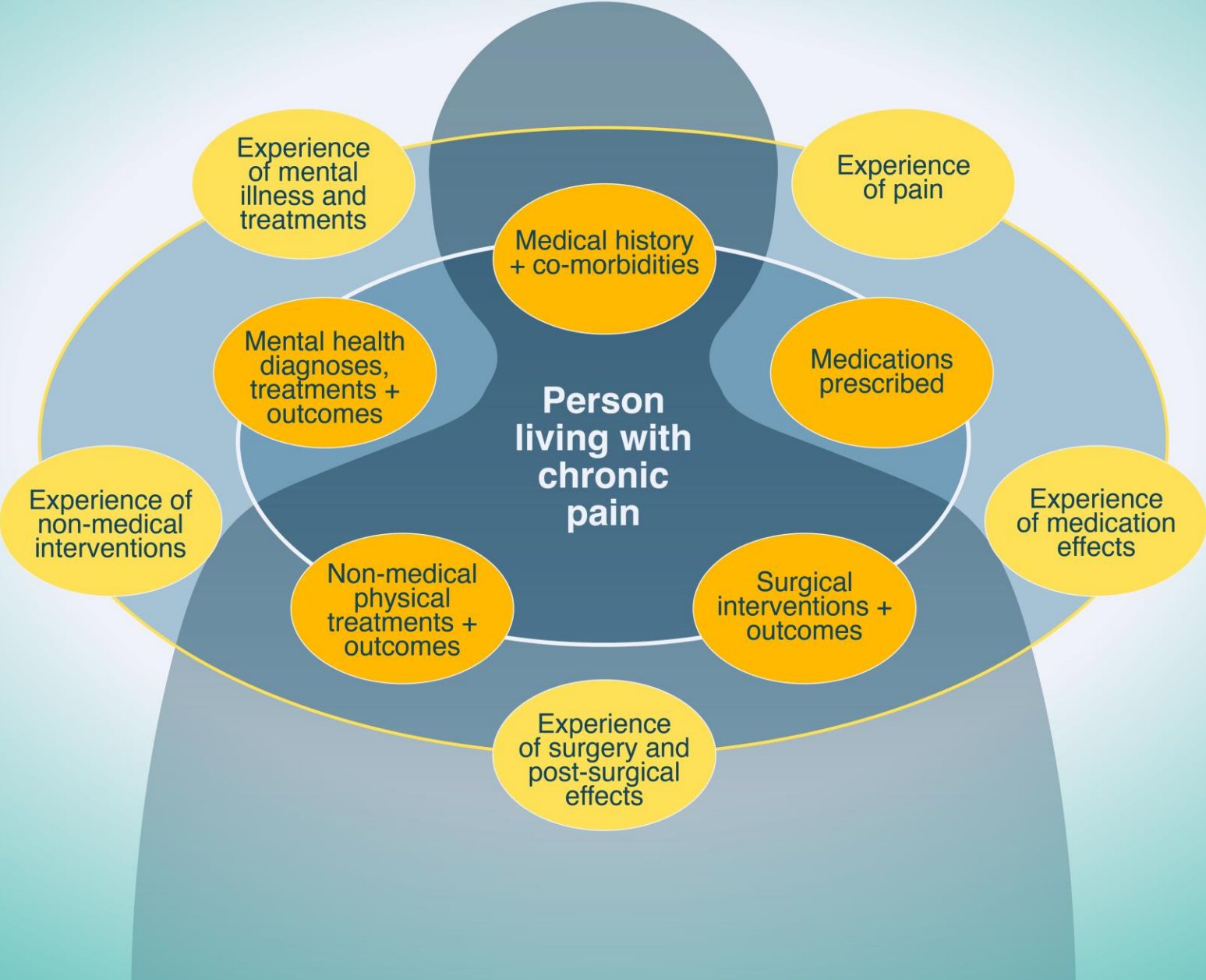
A dark teal silhouette of a person's head and shoulders is centered on the page. The background is a light teal gradient.

Person
living with
chronic
pain

What we can learn from clinical assessment



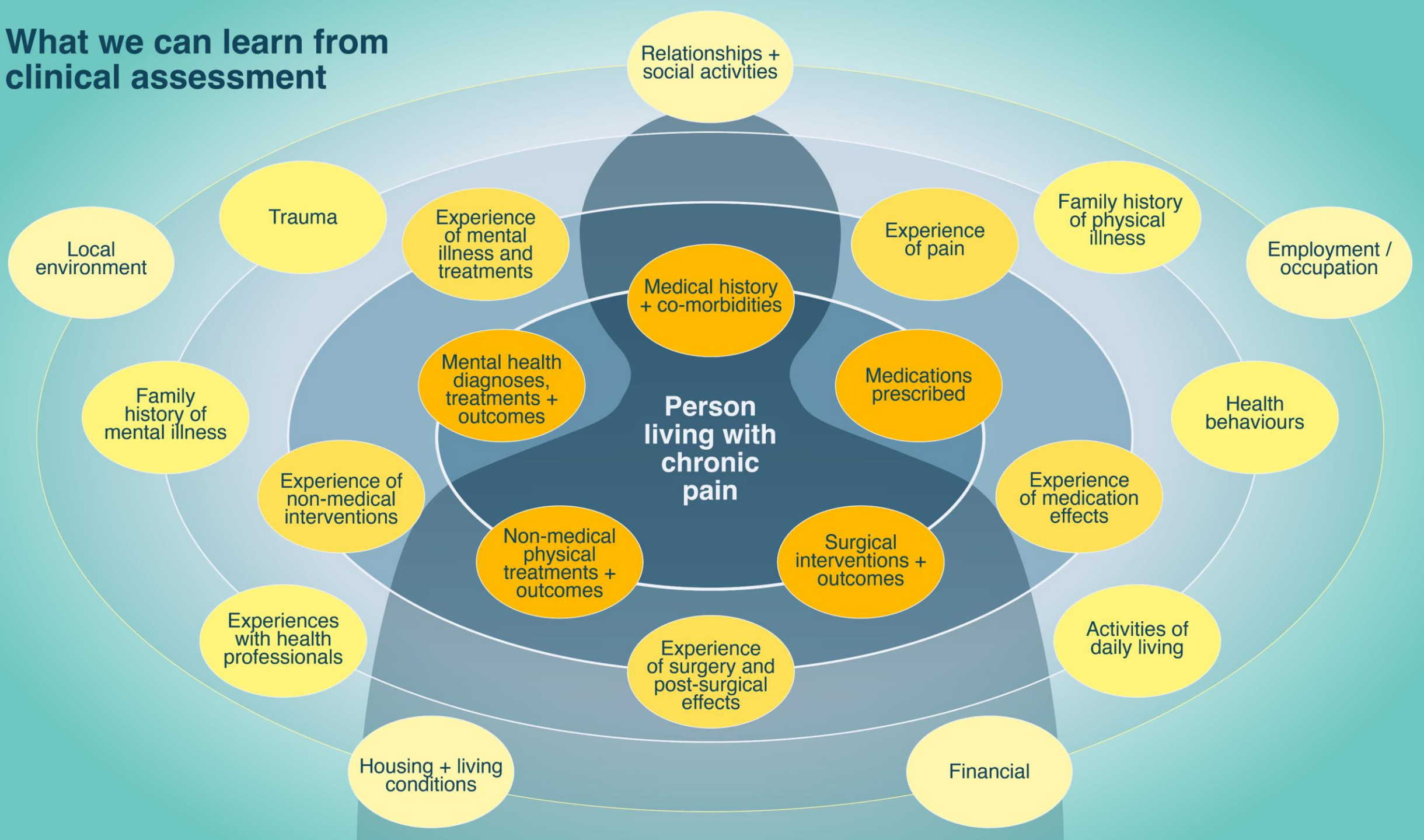
What we can learn from clinical assessment



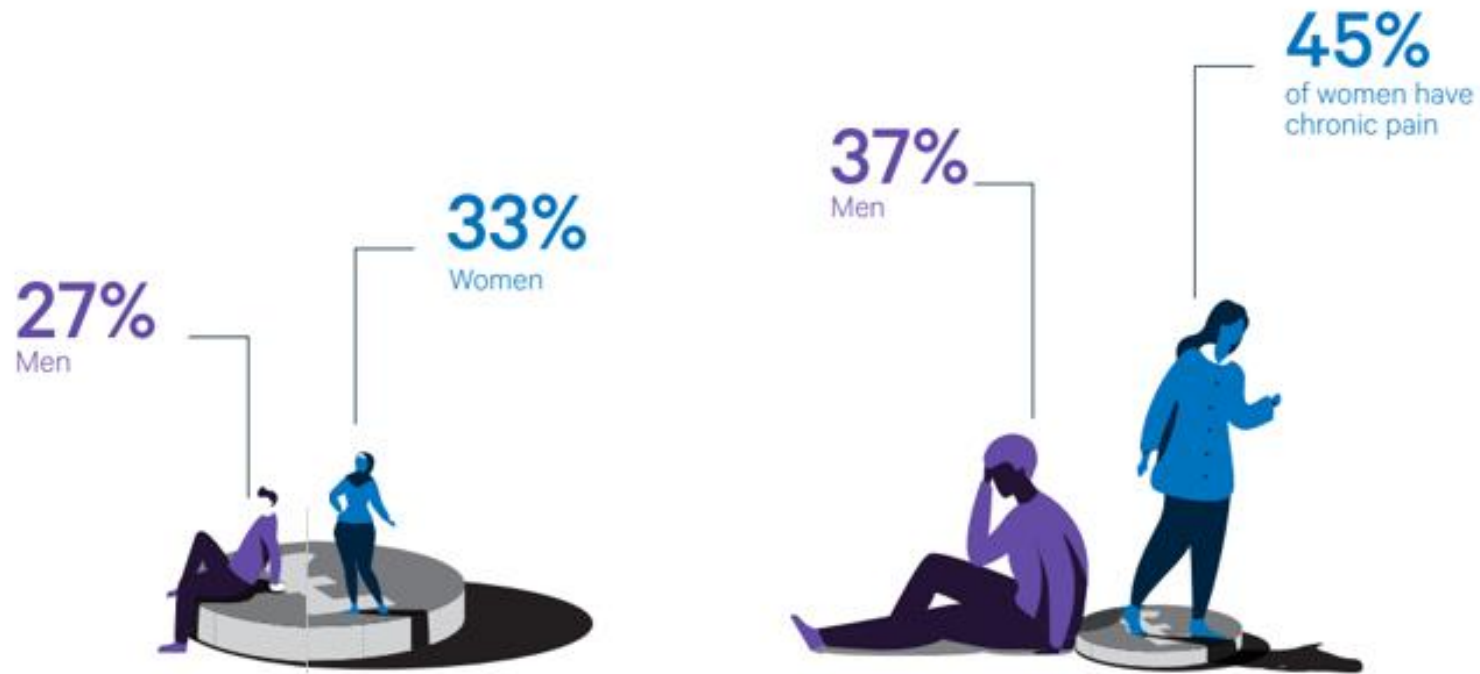
What we can learn from clinical assessment



What we can learn from clinical assessment



Chronic pain and deprivation



Least deprived

Most deprived

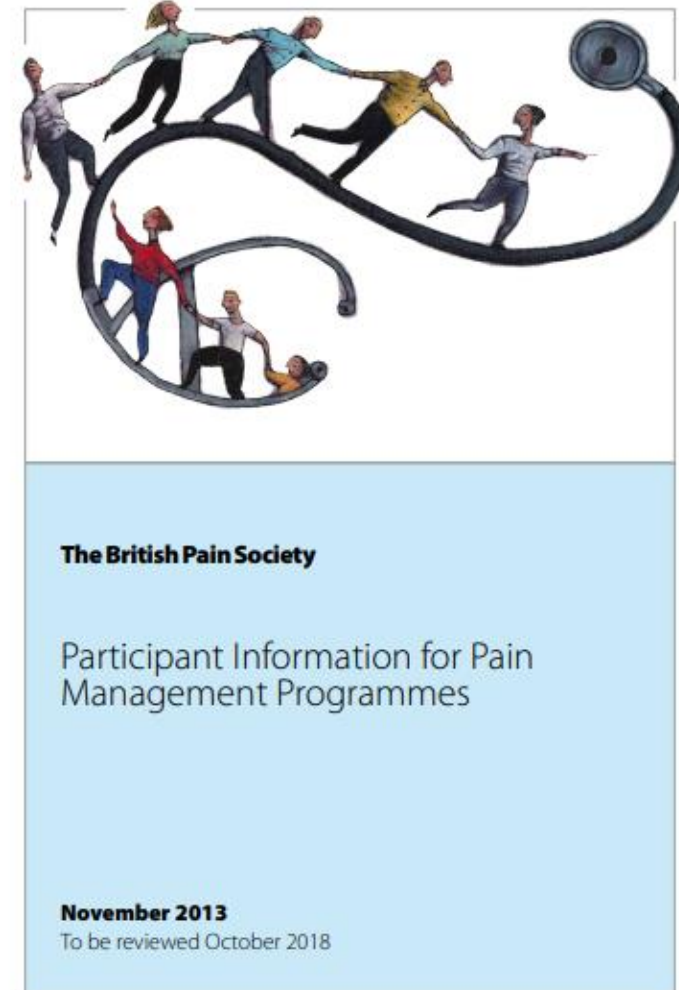
Pain and poverty

- Chronic pain reduces people's economic wellbeing
- Poor economic wellbeing contributes to the experience of chronic pain
 - Poor housing (small spaces, shared sleeping spaces, damp)
 - Unsafe/unhealthy local environments (light and noise pollution, poor street lighting, antisocial behaviour)
 - Low quality bedding/seating
 - Lower levels of education and health literacy
 - High levels of stress (financial, occupational, health etc.)
 - No alternatives to waiting lists



Chronic Pain Group Interventions (PMP)

- Psychologically led
- Interdisciplinary
- Includes:
 - Information about acute and persistent pain
 - Treatment options
 - Skills to manage pain – e.g., paced activity/exercise, sleep etc.
 - Coping with the psychological impact of pain
 - Improving confidence and quality of life
- Not everyone with chronic pain can access PMPs



PMPs – what people valued most

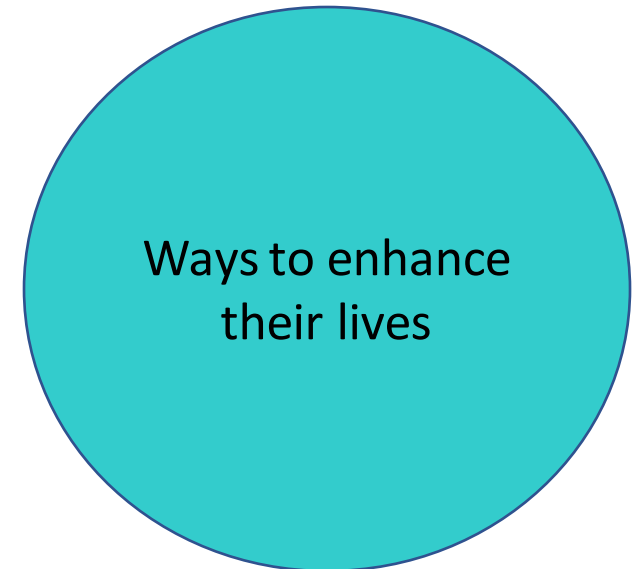
Knowledge



Skills



Hope



How can people living with poor health be empowered to take their own decisions on how best to improve their health?

Information and support resources

British Pain Society – resources for people living with pain

<https://www.britishpainsociety.org/people-with-pain/useful-addresses/>

Self Management Toolkit – Pete Moore

<https://www.paintoolkit.org/>

British Psychological Society - A normal psychology of chronic pain

<https://www.bps.org.uk/psychologist/normal-psychology-chronic-pain>

Online you'll find several UK pain charities/support groups for people living with chronic pain and their families.