

We write as UK Pain Consultants in response to the NICE draft guidance for managing chronic pain in adults which advises against the use of painkillers for those with chronic primary pain. Currently the guidance does not differentiate clearly enough between 'chronic pain' due to a known cause, which affects 30-50% of the U.K. population and the target group of patients with so-called 'chronic primary pain' (CPP) with no known diagnosis which affects only about 5% of the population. It fails to acknowledge that chronic pains of both known and unknown cause may coexist in the same patient and may share common mechanisms. Because of this lack of clarity, we are concerned that a large proportion of the population will not be offered perfectly appropriate painkillers and that some patients will not be referred to pain clinics for treatment because of the erroneous impression that the guidelines apply to all chronic pain.

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