



# Arthritis & Osteoporosis NT

The Arthritis Foundation of the Northern Territory Inc ABN 67 099 326 608

## ACCESSING SERVICES in ALICE SPRINGS

### Rheumatologist

Dr Stephen Brady *Alice Springs Hospital Consultations on Tuesdays*

### Support Group

For Inflammatory arthritis  
First Monday each month 4 - 5pm Adam Giles MLA Office, Ground Floor Anangu House  
*Convenor* Rosie Gibbins 0428 520920

### Community Education

Trained Volunteer community speakers available to attend group to provide information and encouragement to utilise health professionals and manage **arthritis. Ph AONT 1800 011 041**

### Tai Chi

*Tai Chi For Arthritis /Health 6 week programs*  
Carmel Leonard, Youth Centre Tues and Thursday Ph 895262417

### Hydrotherapy

Crown Plaza: heated pool available to fitness centre members. According to Alice Springs Hospital Rehab mgr, this is the best option for patients to use personally prescribed ex regime.  
Old Timers Nursing Home: Presently only available for residents.  
Advocacy for public use hydrotherapy pool required.

### Chair Based Exercise Classes

U3A members: Monday – Irene Heaton 0408222294

### Self Management

6 week self management courses led by exercise physiologist & occupational therapist  
*OAK Osteoarthritis of the Knee (OAK)*\_AONT seeking funding application to conduct 2 courses in Alice Springs  
*Rheumatoid Arthritis Program (RA-P)*. AONT seeking private enterprise partnership to offer by end of 2010 in Alice Springs

### Aids

*Alice Mobility*:\_89523599

### Government Subsidised accessible services

*Aged Care Assessment Team*:-  
\_Over 60 year olds only Referral from doctor to have team members assess home requirements.

*GP Extended Care Plan:*

For anyone diagnosed with a chronic condition (lasts for more than 6 months)  
5 Medicare rebates per calendar year to allied health care team in accordance with plan prepared between patient and GP. This is a great to start an exercise or diet program. Doctor's referral required.

**Bone Density Testing**

Bookings through Outpatients – Alice Springs Hospital (ASH) – Telephone 1800 761 855  
. Royal Adelaide Hospital and ASH co ordinate annual visits through ASH.

**Podiatry**

*Podiatry Plus* Tel: 8952 5601  
*Darwin Podiatry* Tel 8952 1666 – *Visiting podiatrist*

**No Falls Course**

Not currently available in Alice Springs

**Volunteering SA & NT**

Robyn Toi Project Officer  
Volunteering SA & NT, PO Box 4245, Alice Springs Telephone 8952 9630

## **Rehabilitation Programs**

### ***TIPS REFERRAL***

The Territory Integrated Pain Service (TIPS) provides multidisciplinary assessment and management for those with persistent pain. TIPS is based at Alice Springs Hospital. It works collaboratively with general practitioners from the Central Australian region in offering a service for those with persistent non-cancer pain.

The TIPS team includes coordinator, physiotherapy and psychology staff, along with visiting pain specialists from anaesthetic and rehabilitation medicine backgrounds. The VSP visits from RAH pain management unit six times per year. The physiotherapist is based at ASH, and works part time for the pain service. Individual physiotherapy treatments are given depending on assessment findings and resources. The visiting psychologist from TIPS Darwin performs psychology assessments as required. Individual therapy sessions are arranged with private psychology services depending on assessment findings.

To ensure best use of our limited resources, there is a strong emphasis on the most efficient use of TIPS services. Initial information about patients referred to the service is gained via the medical referral letter and the Patient Screening Questionnaire. Subsequent assessment may involve telephone contact with the patient's GP or "in person" assessment with TIPS staff.

Following the multidisciplinary assessment phase a management plan will be formulated with the patient. Typically the plan is implemented in the community with support from the GP. Some patients are offered specific management from the TIPS team. This could consist of medication or procedural approaches, individual physiotherapy or psychology input, and/or group pain management programs.

### ***Referral***

The Territory Integrated Pain Service (TIPS) provides a referral service for the Central Australian Region. We do not accept out of area referrals due to the demand on our Service.

Patient referral to TIPS for assistance with assessment and management of their pain will need:

- [Medical Referral from GP or Specialist](#)
- [TIPS Patient Screening Questionnaire](#)

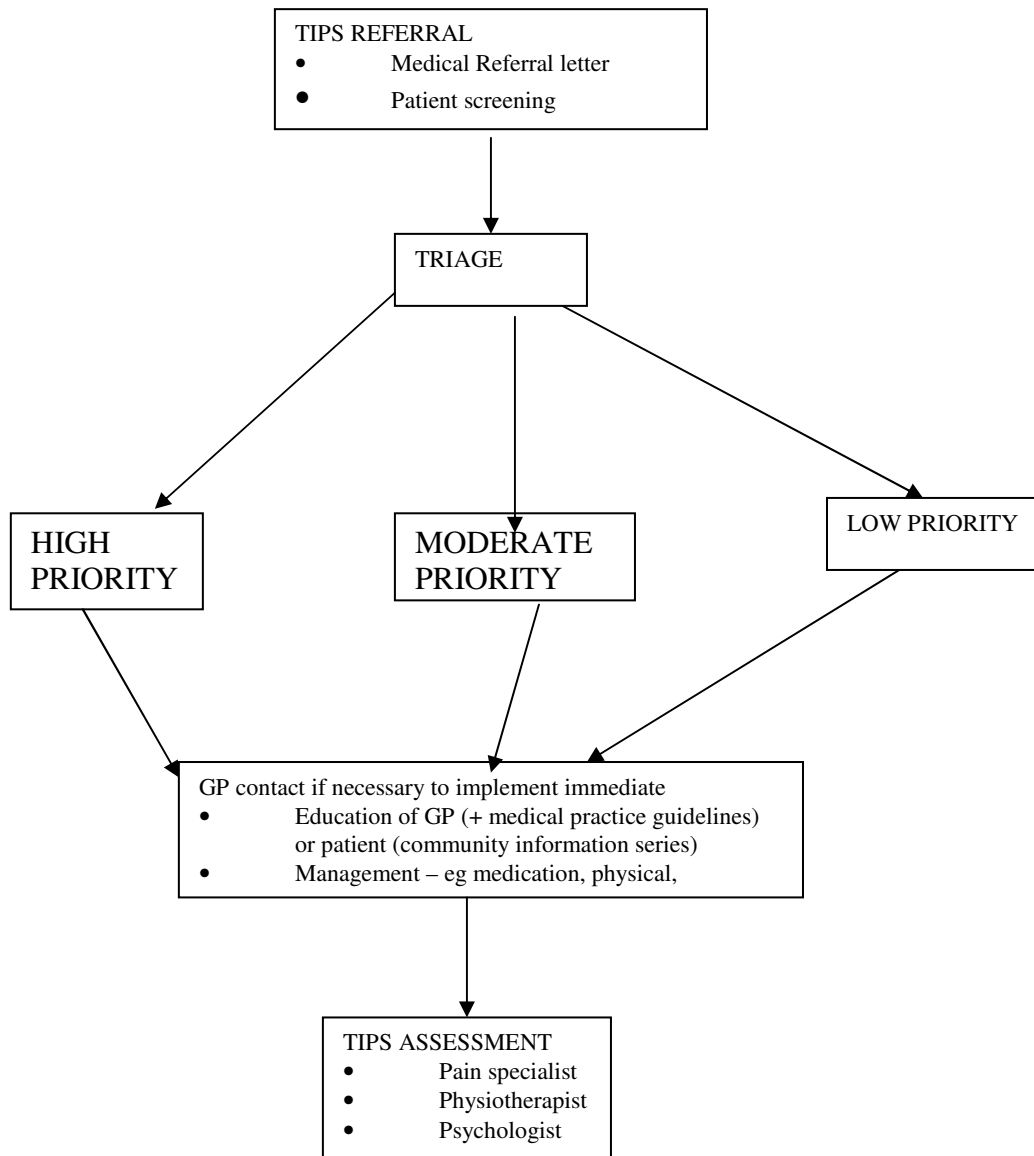
Referrals may be made either by the GP or treating specialist using the Medical Referral form or Practice letterhead. It is vital that referrals include as much background information as possible. Wherever possible, relevant copies of previous specialist consultations and imaging reports should be included. GP's are asked to print a copy of the TIPS patient screening questionnaire and ask the patient to complete it while they are at the clinic. The referral will not be acted upon until the completed Patient Screening Questionnaire is received by TIPS. Referrals should be addressed to OPD, Alice Springs Hospital

**Send Medical Referral and completed Patient Screening Questionnaire to:**

*Territory Integrated Pain Service  
OPD  
Alice Springs Hospital  
PO Box 2234  
ALICE SPRINGS NT 0871  
Ph: 1800 761 855*

### **Triage Pathway**

Referrals to TIPS are directed according to the following pathway. The aim is to promote effective pain management across the community. GP's are encouraged to manage the majority of patients in the community whilst referring specific sub-groups to TIPS.



Waiting List Management aims to provide early contact, usually by telephone, with the patient and/or the referring doctor. The details of the case are discussed and an initial management plan decided upon. For some patients plans are suggested that can be put in place with the support of their general practitioner, without the need to see TIPS staff in person. For instance, information available in the **community information series** or **medical practice guidelines** may assist the patient or their GP respectively to better address aspects of the patient's pain picture. In other cases appointments are made for assessment by TIPS staff.

### **Referral Criteria**

The following table shows how people with different types of pain problems are prioritised. TIPS waiting time targets are also shown.

	<b>HIGH PRIORITY (1)</b>	<b>MODERATE PRIORITY (2)</b>	<b>LOW PRIORITY (3)</b>	<b>REFERRAL NOT INDICATED</b>
<b>CRITERIA</b>	<p>Severe pain and distress not responding to GP management</p> <p><b>Focus areas:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Neuropathic pain &lt; 3/12 duration (including CRPS)</li> <li>2. Medication optimisation esp escalating levels of opioids</li> <li>3. Work related injuries</li> <li>4. Adolescent referrals</li> </ol>	<p>Pain &lt; 1 year duration, not responding to GP management</p> <p><b>Focus areas:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Neuropathic pain</li> <li>2. Marked psychological distress</li> <li>3. Marked physical interference</li> <li>4. Opioid authority</li> <li>5. Multiple presenters to healthcare facilities</li> </ol>	<p>Patients with pain of any duration who can be well-managed by GP (using appropriate guidelines where necessary) following GP/TIPS contact.</p> <p><b>Focus areas:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Medication optimisation</li> <li>2. Psychological distress</li> <li>3. Physical interference</li> <li>4. Diagnostic advice</li> <li>5. General advice</li> </ol>	<p>Previous TIPS clients who have not followed management recommendations.</p> <p>Previous TIPS clients for whom no new management approaches are available.</p>
<b>WAITING TIME TARGET</b>	3 months	6 months	9 months (3 months for GP contact)	

### **What is Chronic Pain**

A good resource for the health professional is a RHEF production "Chronic Pain: the invisible epidemic". It can be found at : <http://www.rhef.com.au/programs/601/601.html>