

OPEN for healthcare professionals in Australia and beyond

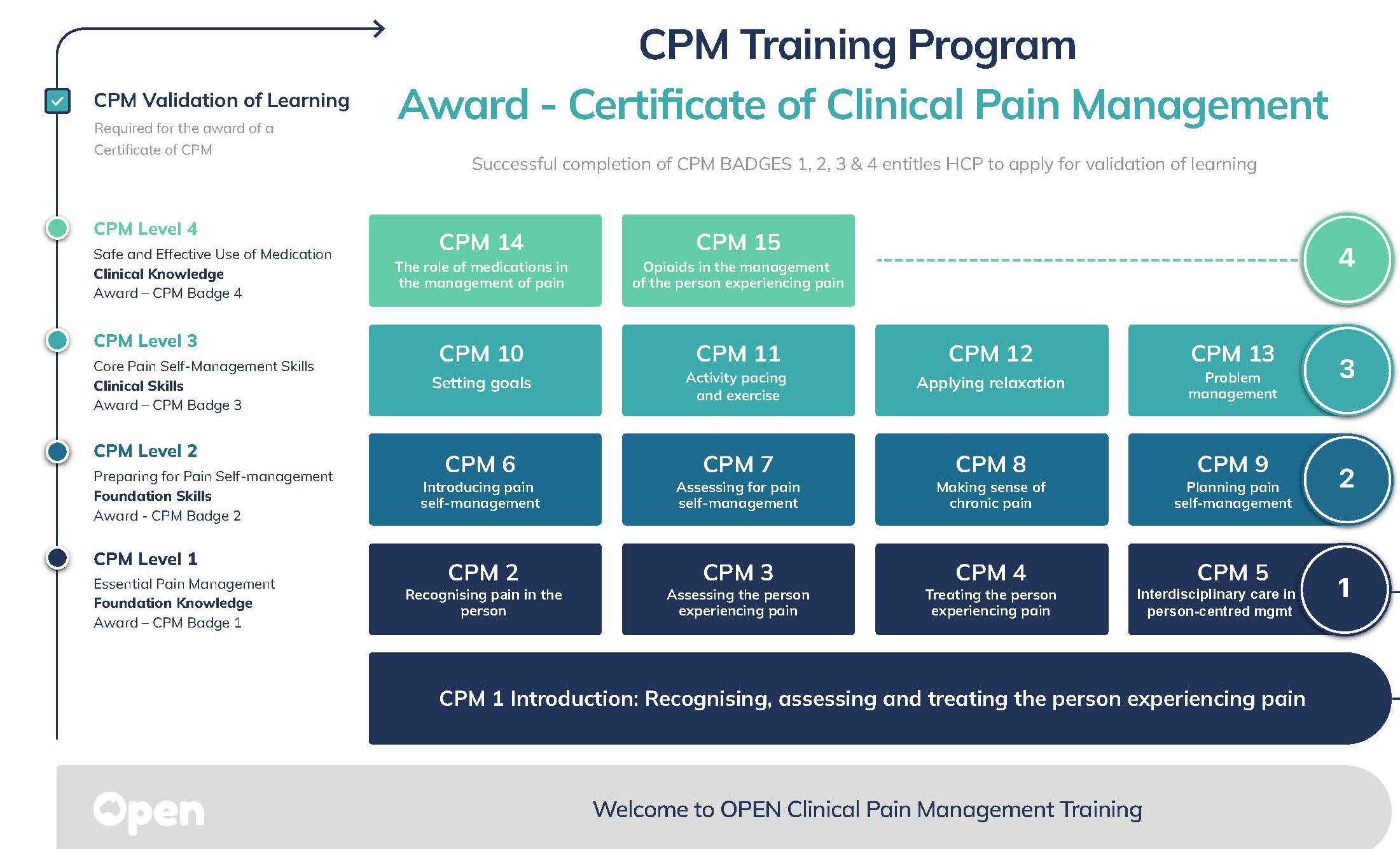
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Background

In 2019 the Australian National Strategic Action Plan for Pain Management identified the need for healthcare professionals who are ‘well informed on best practice evidence-based assessment and care and supported to deliver this care’^[1]. To support this need, the Australian Government awarded a four-year grant (2020) to a Consortium of Universities and peak bodies to develop digitally-supported interdisciplinary, healthcare professional pain management training programs. A key outcome is the Open Pain Education Network (OPEN), which houses 15 online interdisciplinary Clinical Pain Management (CPM) training modules to upskill health professionals in four key areas:

- Level 1 (CPM1-5): Essential pain management (foundational knowledge);
- Level 2 (CPM6-9): Preparing for pain self-management (foundational skills);
- Level 3 (CPM10-13): Core pain self-management skills (clinical skills); and
- Level 4 (CPM14-15): Safe and effective use of medications (clinical knowledge).

Figure 1: Educational Framework



Aims

OPEN aims to support the ‘right training, at the right time, by the right team in the right place’ for emerging, current and future health workforces by:

- providing coherent, consistent, integrated healthcare professional pain training that genuinely reflects the priorities of people living with chronic pain, carers and healthcare professionals and supports ‘right’ pain care;
- delivering transformative interdisciplinary pain training that is engaging, motivating and relevant for healthcare professionals working across a range of care settings and pain conditions; and
- creating a ‘fit for purpose’ digital platform and training program that is flexible, has great user experience, easy navigation, integrations, reporting analytics, and certification.

Development of OPEN

Project management and planning

Establishing project governance structure

- Established project infrastructure and outlined key milestones, including the formation of an Expert External Advisory Group with wide stakeholder representation.

Building the foundations for OPEN

- Developed educational framework for the interdisciplinary digital pain management training - the architecture of the OPEN training modules (see Figure 1)
- Determined branding guidelines and learning design approach (language, style, format, interactivity, assessment)
- Derived the consumer pain care priorities framework using a priority setting partnership approach^[2]
 - Australian people living with chronic pain and carers were asked “what are the most important things your health professional needs to be able to do to help you/others manage chronic pain?”
 - A coding framework was inductively derived from responses – 842 pain care priorities (9 categories/52 items)
 - In a parallel study, healthcare professionals were asked to rate importance of derived categories/items and their confidence in their ability to support these care priorities. Final framework was **44 items/9 domains**.
- Priorities for OPEN training efforts were identified from framework and content mapped to identify gaps and adapt/develop new content.

Module development, review and refinement

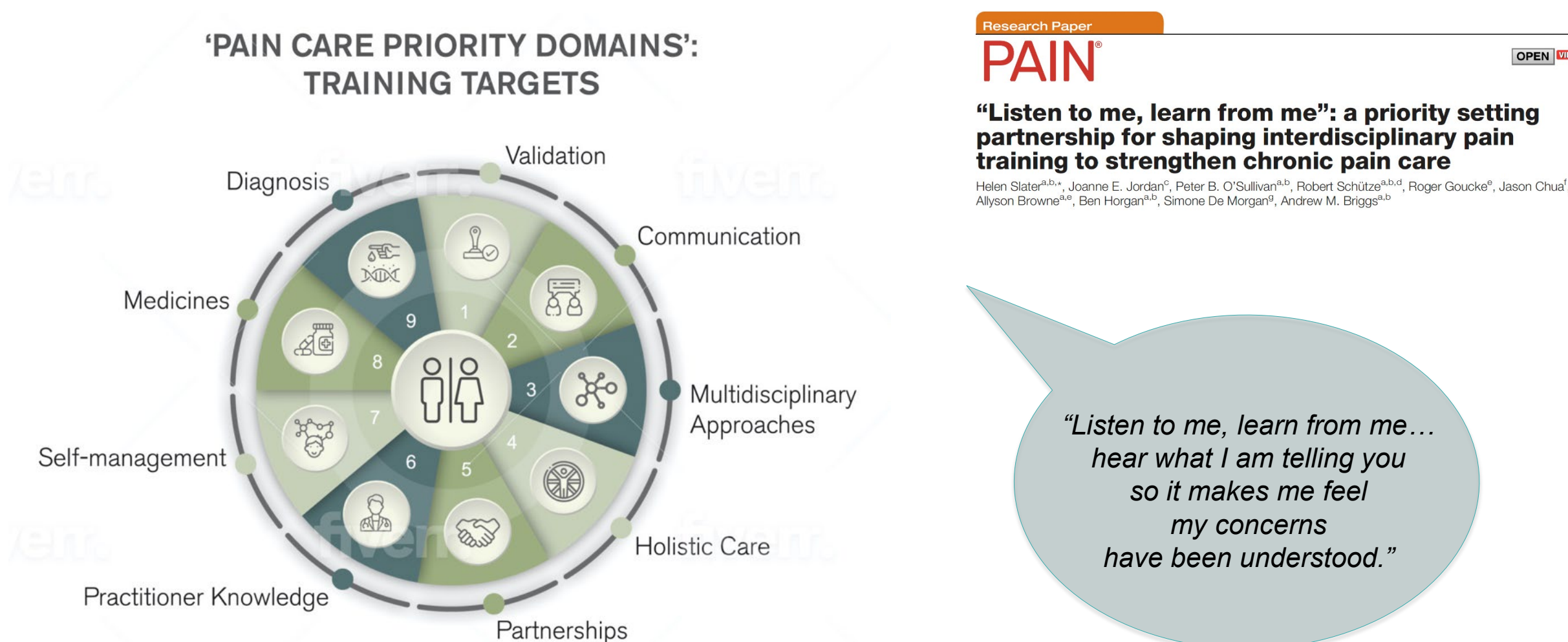
Content Development

- Prepared storyboards (content, structure and interactivity) for each CPM module, using consistent language and person-centred framework for online content and learning activities.
- Built CPM modules based on established pain management training programs^[3-5].
- Uploaded module materials and reviewed design for learner interactivity and engagement.

Module Review

- Step 1: External quality review of selection of CPM modules - one module from each level of training.
 - Review considered: functionality; satisfaction with design; diversity representation; satisfaction with content; flexibility of learning, and accessibility.
 - Refinements included: updates to module content (consistency, clarity, messaging, flow), styling (images/graphics/language), improvements to functionality and navigation.
- Step 2: Expert multidisciplinary panel (healthcare professionals, consumer pain organisation representatives and key stakeholders) completed user testing activity.
 - Each panel member reviewed 2 modules and provided feedback about functionality; visual design & user engagement; content; appropriateness and feasibility. Final modules refinements and adjustments incorporated where necessary.

Figure 2: Consumer Pain Care Priorities



Dissemination strategies and next steps

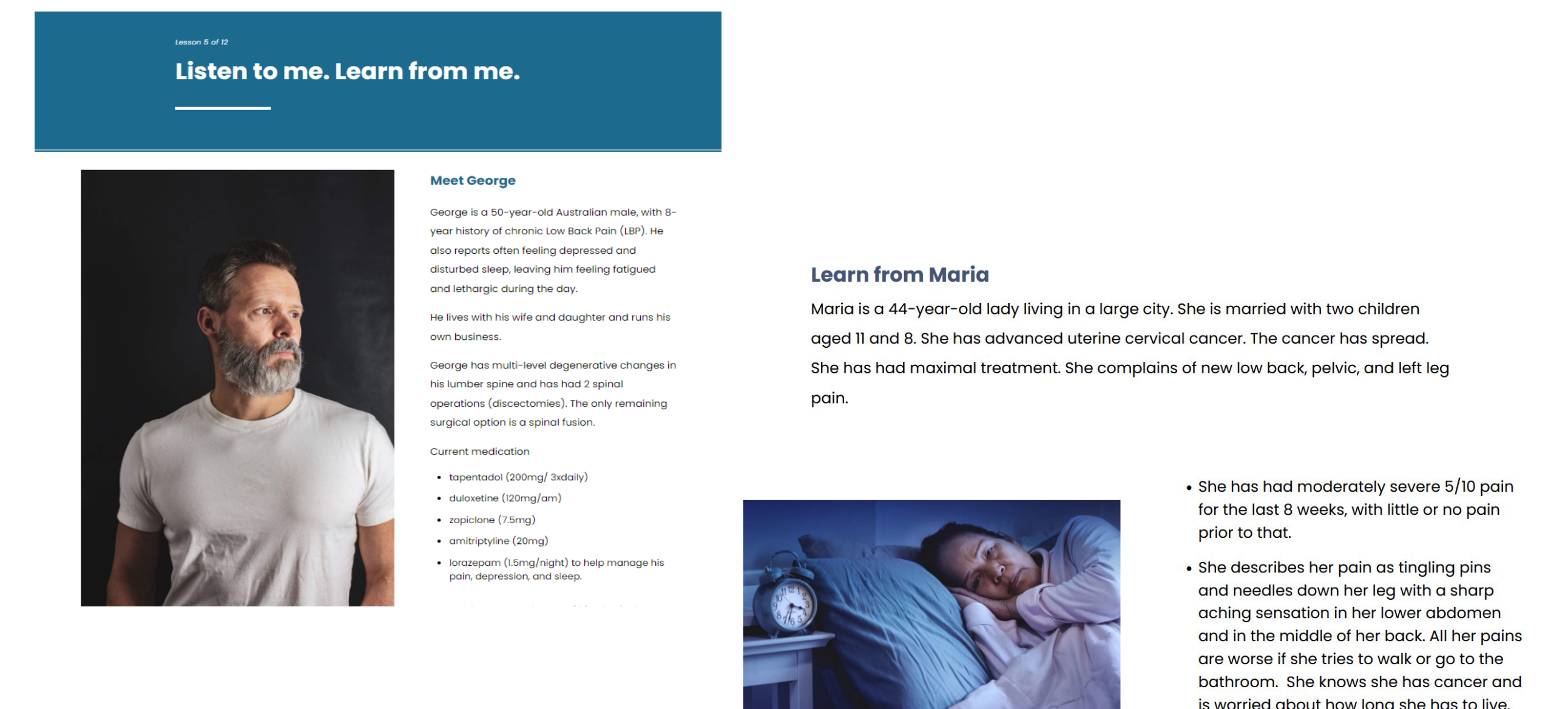
Topical workshop presentations at the Australian Pain Society (APS) Annual Scientific Meetings (in 2021/2023/2024) had a high level of engagement with clinicians, researchers, key stakeholders, consumer pain organisations and consumers.

In March 2024, a Senior Strategic Communication Manager was appointed to develop and implement a **stakeholder engagement and communications plan**, with the aim of promoting and encouraging adoption of the training program to ensure a wide reach of healthcare professionals across Australia.

Planning currently underway for the launch of OPEN training program in 2025. The aim OPEN is to link to industry by continuing professional development to ensure training is workplace relevant. Our priority **dissemination partners** for phase 1 include professional associations, Australian Pain Society, Primary Health Networks, consumer pain organisations, and compensable bodies. (For further information see www.openpaintraining.com.au).

Conclusion

Upskilling healthcare professionals from all professional disciplines in person-centred, best practice pain management is critical. OPEN Clinical Pain Management Training Program is an eLearning training program to address this need, with content developed by leading clinical experts and informed by input from Australians with lived experience of pain. The training program will ensure more equitable access to training in best practice person-centred pain care for all healthcare professionals regardless of their location, career stage or professional discipline.



Acknowledgements

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Ethical permissions

Curtin University Human Research and Ethics Committee approved the pain care priorities study (HRE2020-0733).

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OPEN training has been shaped by Australian consumers with lived experience, carers, and internationally-recognised healthcare professionals and educators.

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