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AUSTRALIAN  
PAIN SOCIETY

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### CONFERENCE BRINGS HOPE TO AUSTRALIANS LIVING WITH PAIN

Some of the best minds in pain research and treatment will gather in Adelaide next month to discuss the exciting advances that offer hope to the five million Australians living with pain.

Three international heavyweights will join home-grown experts at the Australian Pain Society's Annual Scientific Meeting at the Adelaide Convention Centre, 9-12 April, 2017.

The conference takes place amid rapid scientific progress in understanding chronic pain and developing effective non-drug treatments including psychological and physical therapies.

International speakers will discuss topics such as: global efforts to map the brain and spinal cord regions that perceive and process pain (Dr Sean Mackey, Stanford University); mindfulness and cognitive-behavioural treatments for chronic pain (Dr Judith Turner, University of Washington); the role of genetics in predisposing patients to chronic pain (Professor Stephen Hunt, University College London).

A line up of Australian speakers will discuss the role of sleep, perception, culture, brain stimulation, alternative drug therapies, PTSD, and the continuum from acute to chronic pain and everything in between.

Chronic pain is a major health challenge, affecting around one in five Australians. It is pain that persists more than three months, often long after the initial tissue injury has healed. Common variations include lower back, neck, knee, and post-operative pain.

The importance of developing effective non-drug treatments for chronic pain is highlighted by Australia's move to ban over-the-counter sales of popular medications containing the powerful opioid painkiller codeine. The new regulation, to come into effect on 1 February 2018, is aimed at stopping a rapid rise in codeine addiction and overdose-related deaths.

Other widely-used medications are also losing credibility as treatments for chronic pain, with recent studies casting doubt on the effectiveness of paracetamol and anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen in reducing lower back pain.

Australian Pain Society President, Dr Geoffrey Speldewinde, said: "This important scientific meeting will lead to the sharing of knowledge and practical collaborations that can be used to develop the best possible treatment options for all Australians living with pain."

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Australian Pain Society  
[37<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Meeting](#)  
9-12 April 2017 | Adelaide Convention Centre

The Australian Pain Society (APS) is Australia's leading national forum of a wide range of university-trained health professionals (including GP and specialist doctors, nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, psychologists and researchers) trained in the recognition, research, management and advocacy around all aspects of pain in Australia.