

# E-therapy – online mental health and persistent pain resources

**E-therapy programs are generally free web-based support programs where people can access information and counselling to assist them in managing persistent pain or mental health issues such as anxiety and depression.**

## E-therapy for mental health

Feelings of distress, depression, anxiety, anger, fear or guilt are common after an accident. These feelings can be overwhelming and sap a person's energy and confidence. They can affect the way a person relates to other people and make it difficult to go about their day to day lives.

Talking to a GP or a mental health professional can help with these feelings.

The TAC understands that people can be reluctant to talk openly or seek help from a mental health professional. They also may not have the time to commit to scheduled sessions.

Research in Australia and internationally shows that online cognitive behavioural therapy (E-therapy) is a successful way to treat mental health issues, especially for anxiety and depression.

## E-therapy for persistent pain

Persistent pain is pain that is daily or ongoing for greater than three months. It is complex, difficult to make sense of and can be changeable from moment to moment.

There are a number of ways to manage persistent pain, such as pain management programs, pain specialists and medications.

E-therapy resources can also help by providing access to reliable user friendly evidence-based information and skills to help manage pain.

E-therapy can also assist with any mental health issues people may be experiencing as part of their persistent pain.

## How it works

E-therapy services provide treatment and support through telephone, mobile phone, computer and online applications. There are a wide range of services from providing information and peer support through to real time interaction with trained clinicians.

Online and telephone-based services provide an anonymous service that people can access without having to leave the privacy of their homes.

## Who is this service for?

E-therapy services are for people experiencing persistent pain, distress or mild to moderate symptoms of mental disorders, particularly stress and anxiousness or depressive like symptoms.

It is important that you talk to your treating health practitioner before starting any support service, including E-therapy services, to make sure it is right for you. Discuss your symptoms with your treating health practitioner to see if E-therapy is suitable for your situation.

Generally most E-therapy programs are free. You should therefore contact the TAC before accessing any E-therapy service that requires payment.

## Can I access psychology services at the same time?

Yes, you can use traditional clinician-led psychology or psychiatry services while also using E-therapy.

E-therapy service providers may direct users to more appropriate face to face services if they identify that a higher level of care is required.

If you are already having psychology or psychiatry treatment, you should check with your clinician about the appropriateness of using E-therapy in addition to those services.

## Where do I find E-therapy services?

The Australian Government's mindhealthconnect website at [www.mindhealthconnect.org.au](http://www.mindhealthconnect.org.au) provides up to date information and resources to assist with mental health and persistent pain treatment.

There you will find a list of online E-therapy services as well as other information about anxiety, stress and depression.

The Western Australian Department of Health painHEALTH website <http://painhealth.csse.uwa.edu.au> provides up to date information and resources about pain management.

## Where can I get further information?

Further information is available in the Claims and Support section > Mental health and persistent pain resources of the TAC's website and the **Your Mental Health** TAC client brochure. Please call 1300 654 329 if you'd like a copy of this brochure.

**NOTE:** The links to the websites above are provided by the TAC for general information purposes only and not provided specifically for any particular client or condition. It is not intended that the information provided be relied on as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. You should always seek the advice of your doctor or other qualified healthcare professional for any questions you may have regarding a medical condition. You should never disregard professional medical or healthcare advice or delay seeking such advice because of something you may have accessed on a website.

## Further information

**TAC Customer Service Centre**  
1300 654 329 (local call)  
1800 332 556 (toll-free outside  
the Melbourne metropolitan area)

**Email**  
[info@tac.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@tac.vic.gov.au)

**Website**  
[www.tac.vic.gov.au](http://www.tac.vic.gov.au)