Our achievements from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

Recognition
Our first research project on *Barriers to self-management of chronic pain in primary care* was well received by healthcare professionals and patients alike, winning prizes at the 2015 British Pain Society and North British Pain Association Scientific Meetings. As part of this project, we developed a Navigator Tool that is designed to support self-management and focus the consultation on meeting the patient’s concerns. Now, our second research project is underway. A group of healthcare professionals in primary care will be trained to change their approach, using the Navigator Tool as an aid to consultations. We are working with the Thistle Foundation, who will train the healthcare professionals in the new approach. This ground-breaking project is funded by The Alliance and Lothian Healthcare Trust and runs to October 2018.

We’ve promoted our research by giving presentations at the Houses of Parliament in London, The Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre in Glasgow and the British Pain Society’s Annual Scientific Meeting in Birmingham. A major highlight of the year was the publication on 19 December 2016 of *Barriers to self-management of chronic pain in primary care* in The British Journal of General Practice, where it is reaching a wider audience.

Pain Education Sessions
Since 2015 Pain Concern and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde have collaborated to provide peer-led pain education sessions. The sessions, which are open to anyone who has had pain for 12 weeks or more, focus on living well with pain. In 2017 the Pain Education Sessions (along with *Airing Pain*) won the Highly Commended category at the Grunenthal Pain Awards. This adds to two awards from 2016, when they were part of a wider project that scooped The Alliance Self Management Award and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Facing the Future Together Award.

We held sessions at 6 venues across Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Next year our plan is to expand the project to another venue, reaching over 350 beneficiaries. Feedback from the participants has been positive with over 98 per cent saying they would recommend the session to others. We exhibited a scientific poster about the sessions at the 2017 British Pain Society Annual Scientific Meeting in Birmingham. In addition, our pain trainers have given presentations across Glasgow to healthcare professionals and support groups (including Bladder Health UK and Endometriosis UK) and they are helping with policy and fundraising.
Airing Pain
Winning the Napp Award for Chronic Pain allowed Pain Concern to launch Airing Pain in 2010. From the beginning, we have made radio programmes in collaboration with producer Paul Evans and disability broadcaster Able Radio. We reached a high point in 2015, when Paul won Best Nations and Regions Producer at the Radio Productions Awards, with the judges singling out Airing Pain’s programme on Female Genital Mutilation as a “stop what you are doing” moment.

This year, we produced 12 programmes (numbers 79 to 90). Topics have varied, from neglected issues such as sickle cell disease to art therapy for children and pain relief for cancer survivors. A series of three podcasts on pain among former members of the armed forces attracted praise from healthcare professionals and veterans alike. Next year we plan to broadcast Airing Pain monthly, and we will celebrate when we reach the 100th edition of Airing Pain.

When our advisory board evaluated Airing Pain, they found that it was well received, with 80% of listeners saying they were helped by listening and over 90% saying they would recommend it to others.

Helpline and forum
Our helpline volunteers are trained to help people live well with pain. They undertake a unique 3-month training course, in pain management and listening skills. Right now, we answer around 200 calls a month but we face growing demand. We trained 7 new helpline volunteers, and next year we are planning a new intake of volunteers. As well as the helpline, we offer online support, through our HealthUnlocked forum with 2,600 active members.

Pain Matters
Covering all aspects of understanding and living well with pain, our quarterly magazine Pain Matters is available in print or electronic format. We distributed 11,000 printed magazines this year. According to a survey of Pain Matters that we conducted, 97% of readers agreed that it met their expectations and 94% said they would recommend it to others. Readers said that the magazine informed, raised awareness, reduced their feelings of isolation and boosted self-management skills. Pain Matters is distributed to more than 50 pain clinics around the UK and has 800 individual subscribers.

Leaflets, videos and website
We revised our flagship booklet ‘Manage Your Pain’, which is available in Welsh for the first time. Also, we published a new leaflet ‘Getting a Good Night’s Sleep’. Its authors Dr Nicole Tang and Corran Moore, from Warwick University Sleep Lab, provide strategies to tackle sleep problems related to chronic pain. Both publications carry the NHS logo, to identify them as resources used for the pain education sessions. In the pipeline, we have 3 new leaflets on medication, funded by Awards for All and written by leading experts John Lee, Roger Knaggs and Chris Wells.

We have retained Information Standard accreditation. This prestigious award certifies that our leaflets and aspects of our website meet the quality standard required by the NHS. Our printed leaflets are available on our website, which acts a hub for all our resources, including Paul Evan’s unique videos on self-management. This year our website attracted 338,000 visits.

Our editor Tom Green built up Pain Concern’s reputation as a serious publisher when it comes to pain. He has left Pain Concern to pursue a teaching career, and one of our trustees Paul Black resigned as trustee so he could step in to help. Paul’s expertise is in marketing and his mission is to get us better known.

We have exhibited our resources at every opportunity including the scientific meetings of the British Pain Society, the Welsh Pain Society, The Scottish Pain Research Community, the North British Pain Association, the Northern Ireland Pain Society and the Societal Impact of Pain Symposium. Also, we have exhibited at third sector events such as The Alliance’s Self-Management Week.

**External affairs.**

Pain Concern representatives sit on top-level policy groups in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and we’ve been invited to join the Scottish Government’s National Advisory Committee. We’ve supported initiatives to improve education of healthcare professionals, contributing to an undergraduate education development group at Glasgow Caledonia University and giving talks at Swansea Medical School and at a Sickle Cell and Thalassemia Study Day at Cardiff and Vale University Hospital. There was special recognition this year for Pain Concern’s chair Heather Wallace, when she was awarded Honorary Membership of the British Pain Society. We are represented on The International Association for the Study of Pain’s Expert Patient Panel. In that capacity, we supported the bid to make 2018 the Global Year for Excellence in Pain Education and we are now assisting with their plans to make it a year to remember.
Legal matters
The charity has incorporated, changing its legal form from an association of members to a company limited by guarantee.