



# Our Mob

Look after your mind, body and spirit to manage pain

**YOU CAN CHANGE your pain**

## Nicki's story

Nicki is 34 and lives in Wollongong with her fiancé. She is getting married soon, and is excited about that. Nicki grew up in Cootamundra, and she still visits family there regularly. Her mum lived in the girls' home.

Nicki has lived for many years with back pain, but also severe arthritis of the elbow and knee. Sometimes she is in so much pain that she doesn't know what to do. Some of the things she finds helpful are exercise, because that strengthens the part of the body that has pain. She finds doing this exercise in water: aqua aerobics, really suits her because her body doesn't ache in the same way. Physio has also been helpful for Nicki.

She attends the Aunty Jean's programme every Tuesday which is helping her get out and be with other people. She lives with bipolar disorder and experiences anxiety and depression, so this group is helpful for that. She does the group activities weekly, and has her health checked as well.

Nicki finds that when she helps other people, she is distracted from her own pain. She thinks that this gives her a sense of purpose.

Medications are part of Nicki's pain story. She would like to get to a place where she has reduced her need for these medications, and only take them when she has a "flare up". Previously she has used endone, targin, panadeine forte, but Nicki knows "they don't take the pain away", and they "can make you sick".

## Nicki's top tips

- Be active
- Offer to help others, and that will distract you from your pain
- Get involved with family and community.



[www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain/our-mob](http://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain/our-mob)

