



MEDIA RELEASE

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HEALTH AND SAFETY COME FIRST FOR SUPPORT WORKERS

[Life Without Barriers](#), the social purpose organisation supporting over 400 communities across Australia, has won the [icare aware award](#) for March, in recognition of how they are valuing the safety and wellbeing of their employees in a sector facing enormous growth.

Jason McLaughlin, [icare](#)'s General Manager Injury Prevention and Pricing, congratulated Life Without Barriers for changing their workplaces into safer ones.

"With the number of Australians aged 65 years and over forecast to more than double over the next 40 years, the increase in the aged care workforce is substantial. Forward-thinking employers like Life Without Barriers are investing in vital skill requirements like injury prevention," Mr McLaughlin said.

"It is very rewarding when NSW organisations from all industries not only develop a safety mindset, but also come up with transformative ways to prevent injuries and build a sustainable safety culture. At the same time, they grasped an opportunity to control the costs of premiums by reducing injuries."

Two years ago, Life Without Barriers recognised the need to make changes within the organisation after analysing high staff injury rates, particularly soft tissue injuries.

Faced with increasing workers insurance premiums and a relatively low awareness of safety among its diverse and growing workforce, Life Without Barriers embarked on their Health, Safety and Wellbeing strategy back in 2016, which is underpinned by their successful 'Live Safe' workplace safety program.

Life Without Barriers Executive Director of People, Safety, Culture Scott Orpin said: "We knew we needed to act quickly so we set up a team of experienced health and safety professionals, developed a two-year strategy and introduced safety branding across Life Without Barriers to make sure the strategy resonated with our people.

"The investment paid off: the first 12 months saw a 20 per cent reduction in the number of safety incidents reported. At the same time, the average number of days off after an injury has dropped by 50 per cent.

"Looking back, there were some very simple principles around safety that drove our success. A culture that supports safety starts with senior management commitment, making it clear across the organisation that safety matters. As well as a good strategic plan, you need the right people to lead the change.

"We want our employees to focus on their jobs – improving the lives of the people we care for. This can only be achieved when everyone is safe and healthy. By creating and maintaining a safety culture, we have sent a clear message that safety matters," Mr Orpin said.

NSW businesses who most need support with injury prevention are set to benefit from a new voluntary program [icare](#) plans to launch in May.

For more information: www.icare.nsw.gov.au/employers/caring-for-your-people/injury-prevention/

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Link to the story on our website: https://icare.nsw.gov.au/news-and-stories/health-and-safety-come-first-for-support-workers/?utm_source=media&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=health-and-safety-10042018

Life Without Barriers is a social purpose organisation supporting over 400 communities across Australia. It provides social support and services to:

- Children and young people
- Families
- People with disabilities
- People who are ageing
- People living with mental illness
- People experiencing homelessness.

'Live Safe' initiatives in NSW include:

- A health and safety roadshow across NSW providing every frontline area with coaching and support for leadership and staff
- Mental health first aid training for frontline employees and supervisors
- Emergency warden and first response fire training (resulting in the implementation of a new national approach)
- A professional jobs dictionary that provides functional assessment information so medical practitioners can make informed decisions on injured employees and their ability to return safely to the workplace
- Injury management information packs for injured employees and their supervisors to enhance communication, knowledge and awareness of roles, responsibilities and requirements in relation to the injury management process
- An intranet site with health, safety and injury management information to support a 24/7 operation.

For more information: <http://www.lwb.org.au/about-us/>

Who is icare?

icare is one of the largest insurance providers in Australia and a Public Financial Corporation providing workers compensation insurance to more than 3.4 million workers, builders, road users and homeowners in NSW and over 296,000 NSW businesses.

icare is a social insurer (not-for-profit), established on 1 September 2015. It has more than \$32 billion in assets across its schemes and insures state-owned assets, including the Sydney Opera House, Sydney Harbour Bridge and Taronga Zoo.

Whether a person is severely injured in the workplace or on our roads, icare supports their long-term care needs to improve quality of life, including helping people return to work.

We're made up of six primary schemes that are committed to delivering better cover, treatment and care to the people of NSW.

Our board of directors reports to the NSW Treasurer.

For more information visit: <http://www.icare.nsw.gov.au>.