



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### icare PARTNERSHIP WITH PARALYMPIANS RAISES AWARENESS OF WORKPLACE SAFETY, INJURY PREVENTION

[icare](#) is targeting its new look Speakers Program to the Manufacturing, Construction and Health & Community Services industries to drive down workplace injuries and help support a culture of workplace safety

In the last 12 months, over 10,700 people have been injured in workplace accidents within the manufacturing industry in New South Wales, followed closely by Construction (9000 injuries) and Health & Community Services (6000 injuries). On average, each of these claims costs more than \$16,000 over its lifetime<sup>1</sup>.

Through the program, run in partnership with the Australian Paralympic Committee, current and former Paralympians who have been affected by workplace injuries visit workplaces across the state to share their stories.

Nigel Smith, an Australian Paralympic volleyball champion, lost his left leg at the age of 25 when it got caught in a chain conveyor working on a heavy industry paint machine. He endured numerous operations and his leg was eventually amputated because of the accident.

"All it took was a split second for my life to change forever" Smith said.

"It's not always up to an employer to point out potential risks on the job - employees also have to be aware. We have to keep striving for safe workplaces".

icare General Manager Loss Prevention and Pricing, Workers Insurance, Jason McLaughlin, said icare's Speakers Program was a great way to support employers engage with the importance of workplace health and safety.

"There is no better investment than giving your staff the training and tools they need to operate a safer work environment every day. This program empowers employers to change the safety culture of their workplace by helping their employees understand the 'why?' around injury prevention," McLaughlin said.

"Our Paralympians are role models of human endeavour and people leading successful lives after being impacted by a severe injury. By sharing their experience, businesses can learn not only about the impacts of a workplace injury but how people can successfully recover if they are injured.

"By putting injury-prevention first NSW employers will reduce loss of productivity, improve their return to work outcomes, and ultimately lower their workers' insurance claims and premium," McLaughlin said.

Over the past six months, Nigel and his fellow Paralympic speakers have shared their stories with employees at more than 70 workplaces from all industries across NSW.

Kelly Heffernan, Human Resource and Payroll Officer from Snowy Monaro Regional Council said: "Nigel was enlightening to listen to. He makes you stop and consider what it means be caught out by the risk of accidents in the workplace and how a life-changing injury can strike anyone. His story will hopefully reduce the risk of injuries on the job."

For more information on icare's NSW Paralympian Speakers Program, or to book a speaker for your organisation, visit: [www.icare.nsw.gov.au/icare-speakers-program](http://www.icare.nsw.gov.au/icare-speakers-program)

<sup>1</sup> icare Workers Insurance, Policy Renewal Year 2016 policies and claims data

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