

Your treatment



Do you have a patient injured at work?

- **96,000 workers are injured each year in NSW**
- **Most injured workers take little or no time off work**
- **For those that do, with the right treatment and care 81% of injured workers are able to return to work within 13 weeks of an injury.**

The important role you play

As a GP, you are often the first point of contact for treatment following a work injury and are the entry point to the healthcare system. You play an important role in your patient's recovery journey by:

- advising on the right treatment options
- helping them effectively manage their injury
- setting clear expectations around treatment, recovery and return to work
- facilitating conversations with other service providers to give your patient the best chance of a smooth recovery and timely, safe return to work.

Having a recovery at work plan detailing the job tasks a patient can perform as they recover, helps with optimal recovery and a timely return to work. Your role is vital at assessing your patient's capacity for work.

Benefits of returning to work for patients

The benefits of work extend well beyond the obvious economic benefits. Work is an important part of many people's lives and the benefits of work to overall health and wellbeing are well documented.

It has been well established that long-term work absence can negatively impact a patient's mental wellbeing as well as their ability to connect with family members and friends. Work absence due to work injury can lead to isolation and long-lasting effects, and extend beyond the initial injury and can hinder your patient's ability to ever return to work.

An individual who is off work for significant periods is:

- 2-3 times more likely to develop mental health conditions, including a significantly increased risk of depression
- 2-3 times more likely to be diagnosed with other health conditions
- more likely to suffer adverse socioeconomic consequences
- more likely to become unemployed in the long-term.

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Their return to work





There are 5 key steps for GPs treating patients injured at work:

1 Set clear expectations around treatment and recovery, including safe recovery at work where possible

The journey to recovery for an injured worker may seem overwhelming and can leave patients feeling confused or worried about the right treatment options and how they will be able to return to work. As a GP, you are often the first point of contact for an injured worker. This provides an opportunity to set expectations around their road to recovery and timeframes, which may involve recovery at work.

2 Identify barriers and potential psychosocial risk factors that may delay recovery or return to work

While many patients recover quickly and return to work, others may face a range of social or psychosocial issues that delay recovery. If your patient requires any support or interventions to overcome identified barriers, include these in the treatment plan or contact the insurer to discuss further.

3 Collaborate with your patient's service providers to develop plans that assist their return to work and recovery

Regularly reviewing your patient's treatment plan, in collaboration with their other service providers will allow unforeseen barriers to be identified and actioned earlier. It is also important to revise the plan when treatment is not resulting in expected improvements.

4 Complete a Certificate of Capacity

The Certificate of Capacity is essential for your patient to access treatment and receive care as they recover and return to work. It should place emphasis on what your patient can do. Your recommendations also help your patient's employer identify suitable work options that will support your patient's recovery.

5 Provide information to the insurer regarding your patient's capacity for work and treatment needs

The more information the insurer has, the faster they will be able to make decisions regarding the treatment and care they can offer your patient under their claim. You can let the insurer know how you would like them to contact you to make supplying this information easier.

Working together

icare is here to help. Working together we can ensure your patient receives the right treatment at the right time, so that they can recover and safely return to work sooner.