



INQUIRY INTO THE 2022 REVIEW OF THE WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME HEARING – Thursday 8 September 2022

Supplementary questions

Question	ARPA NSW response
1. How many psychological claimants in NSW have had an early workplace rehabilitation provider appointed in the last five years? a. List by calendar year if possible?	Unfortunately, ARPA does not collate or receive any data on how many psychological claimants in NSW have had an early workplace rehabilitation provider appointed in the last five years. We would highly recommend requesting this data from SIRA and/or icare.
2. Has there been any cost-benefit analysis of the early appointment of rehabilitation providers? If so, what were the findings of the analysis?	<p>In September 2021 SIRA published a research report that had been developed by EY, to understand the role and impact of Workplace Rehabilitation Providers (WRP) on the NSW workers compensation system. The high-level results showed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For claims between 6 months and 24 months time lost, the appointment of a WRP improves the RTW outcome (relative to those claims that do not have a WRP appointed)• The timely appointment of WRP (within the first 8 weeks) can improve RTW by 3% to 5%• Appointing a WRP early in the claims process can result in total claims costs savings of between 4% and 9%• The impact of WRP on psychological injury claims is materially more than physical injury claims. <p>The report can be found via this link: https://www.sira.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/1017188/EY-Impact-of-Workplace-Rehabilitation-Providers-analysis-of-claims-data.pdf</p> <p>In December 2021, ARPA released a position paper that outlines the return in investment for workplace rehabilitation services. The paper outlines the reasons why we believe workplace rehabilitation in the past has been viewed more as a cost than an investment, the research that overwhelmingly shows the significant return that can be received by investing in early referral to workplace rehabilitation and what we recommend should be enacted to improve return to work rates across Australian workers' compensation schemes. Our report can be viewed by clicking on this link: https://www.arpa.org.au/documents/item/658</p>



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<p>3. What needs to change in the current workers compensation system to ensure the early appointment of rehabilitation provider?</p>	<p>ARPA NSW recommends that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Nominal Insurer mandate referral to workplace rehabilitation for workers not anticipated to RTW within four weeks. Early referral will minimise delay to support; delays of RTW and the associated wages recorded on the claim. Further, it will significantly improve the employer's experience and the worker's experience by allowing the worker to RTW earlier, stay engaged with work and recover at work. The impact of delays can also contribute to a breakdown in the relationship between the worker and the employer and the heightened development of secondary psychosocial factors that directly impact on an individual's recovery timeframes.2. It is imperative that all mental health claims should be referred for workplace rehabilitation services as soon as practicable. Targeted intervention from an independent 3rd party (such as WRPs) with appropriate knowledge in the workplace to facilitate the support mechanism and the relationship between the worker and their employer, has proven benefits for the employer and also for the worker with a mental health issue. The most significant drivers of prolonged work absence are psychosocial factors and therefore psychosocially targeted assistance to support the employer and in turn the worker through a workplace-based intervention will produce the greatest results.3. An appropriate triage model be developed that identifies workers at risk of being off work >4wks.
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