

**Submission
No 255**

INQUIRY INTO NSW WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME

Name: Ms Kim Apps

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I am writing in response to the Workers Compensation Scheme Issues Paper, published by WorkCover NSW.

I am the Business Manager of a NSW Accredited Workplace Rehabilitation Provider and am writing from the perspective of both a small Business managing finances while facing potential premium increases and someone that works within the WorkCover System and sees the daily challenges faced while working within this frame work.

As stated in the issues paper – “International research has consistently found a correlation between early return to work and improved health outcomes. Long term absence and work-disability are harmful to physical and mental health and wellbeing. Recovery and return to work should be the key objects of any workers compensation system” It seems to me that this is where attention should be focussed rather than increasing premiums.

Given the proven correlation between early return to work and improved health outcomes, it makes sense that early referral to Workplace Rehabilitation Providers would play an integral part in achieving this goal. Yet it seems that Agents are waiting longer and longer to refer. A reliable set of data across the scheme would be useful for everybody to be able understand trends and relationships between delay to referral and outcomes.

Reducing the red tape for Workplace Rehabilitation Providers and administrative burden of 7 different service standards instead of one consistent model under the national approval framework will improve WRP efficiency and allow health professionals to concentrate on core RTW activities and intervention rather than administrative or process related tasks.

I am supportive of NSW Workers Compensation reform that is in line with the Guiding Principles stated in the Issues paper, to ensure better health outcomes for injured workers and ensure a financially viable scheme. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss this matter further.

Kim Apps
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