

Employers Taking Lead Role with RTW & 10 Ways To Do It

Active Occupational Health Services

NSW WorkCover & Comcare

Accredited Rehabilitation Provider



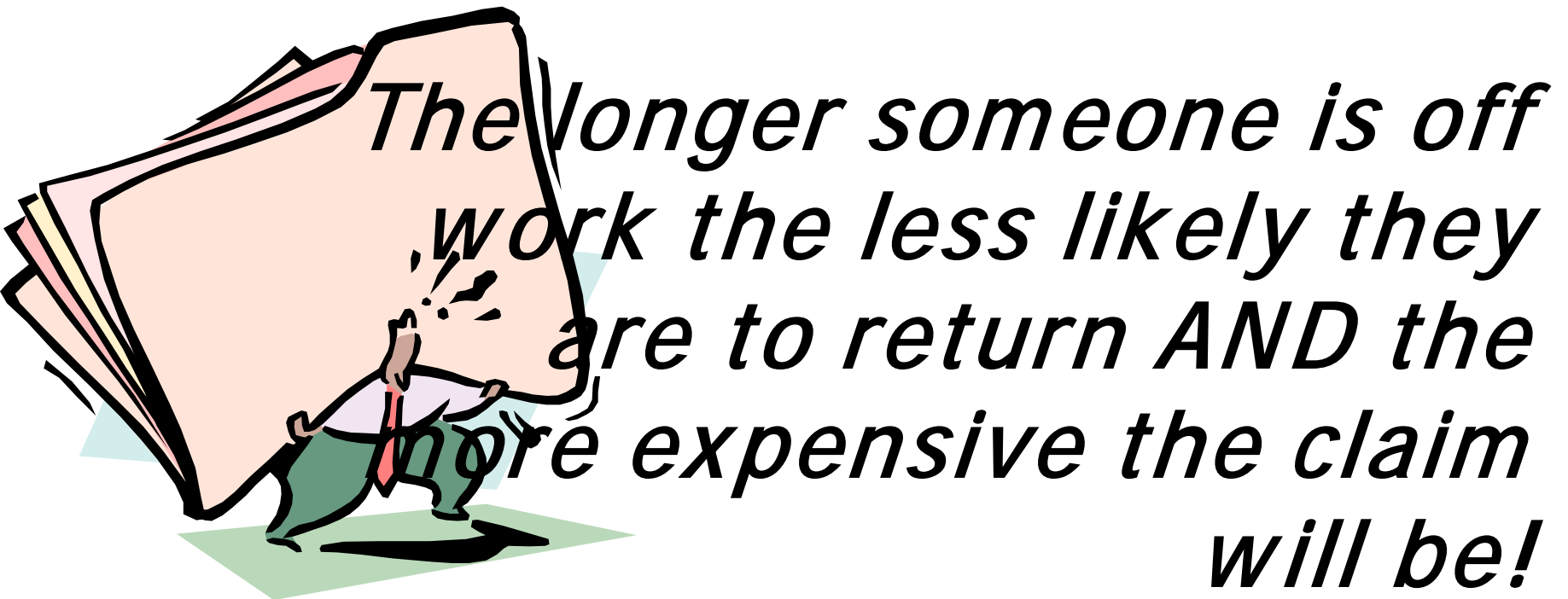
Active Health & Safety P/L trading as Active Occupational Health Services

WHY TAKE THE LEAD?



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STAYING OFF WORK MAKES PEOPLE SICK

The longer someone is off work the less likely they are to return



Time off work	Probability of RTW within 3 months
3 months	50%
6 months	40%
9 months	33%
1 year	25%
2 years	12%
3 years	6%
4 years	4%

SOURCE: Carabelas, T 'What happens when a dispute is lodged in the Workers' Compensation Tribunal?' Presentation to WorkCover SA Conference, 2007

Active OHS

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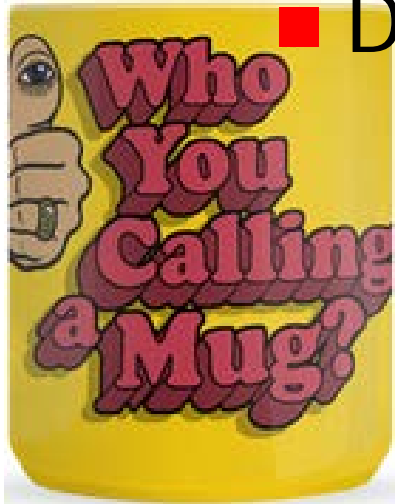
HEALTH BENEFITS OF WORK

- Evidence demonstrates that for most individuals working improves general health and wellbeing and reduces psychological distress.
- Even health problems frequently attributed to work e.g. musculoskeletal and mental health conditions benefit from activity based rehabilitation and an early return to suitable work



BUT IT'S DODGY!

- Claim could be denied however still have a worker who PERCEIVES they have an injury
- Ill-will creates discord and misunderstanding
- Don't become a victim to the system



IMPORTANT TO TAKE THE LEAD

HOW DO I TAKE THE LEAD? No 1



What should you do when a worker is injured?

- Send to your Preferred Medical Advisor wherever possible OR
- Communicate with Treating Doctor
- Offer suitable duties
- Keep in contact and be empathic and supportive
- Expect back at work

HOW DO I TAKE THE LEAD? No 2



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What can I do to prevent an injury/ claim?

Act on aches and pains as they become injuries – send to your Preferred Medical Advisor

Invest in prevention – develop systems

Train Supervisors in their obligation to take safety seriously

Closely manage all claims, don't rely on Insurer

➤ Consider pre-placement screening





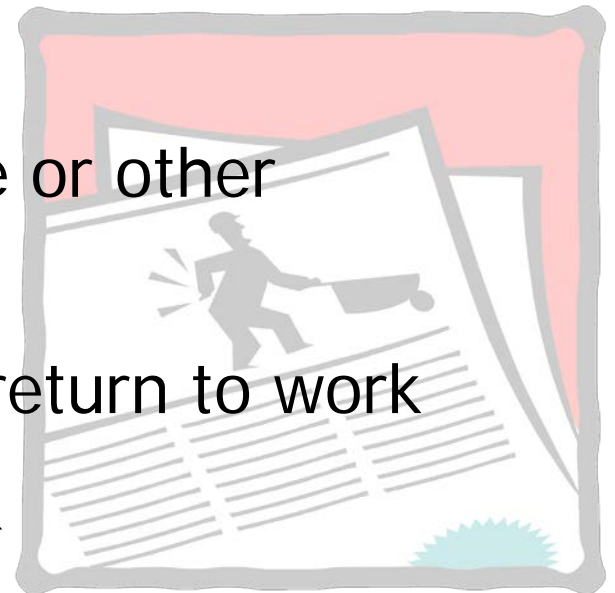
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HOW DO I TAKE THE LEAD? No 3

What if the injured worker is off work for more than 2 weeks?

- ✓ Have them reviewed by your Preferred Medical Advisor
- ✓ Is there conflict in the workplace or other psychosocial issues?
- ✓ Be as flexible as possible about return to work
- ✓ Arrange for them to attend work
- ✓ Remember the body is designed to get better!





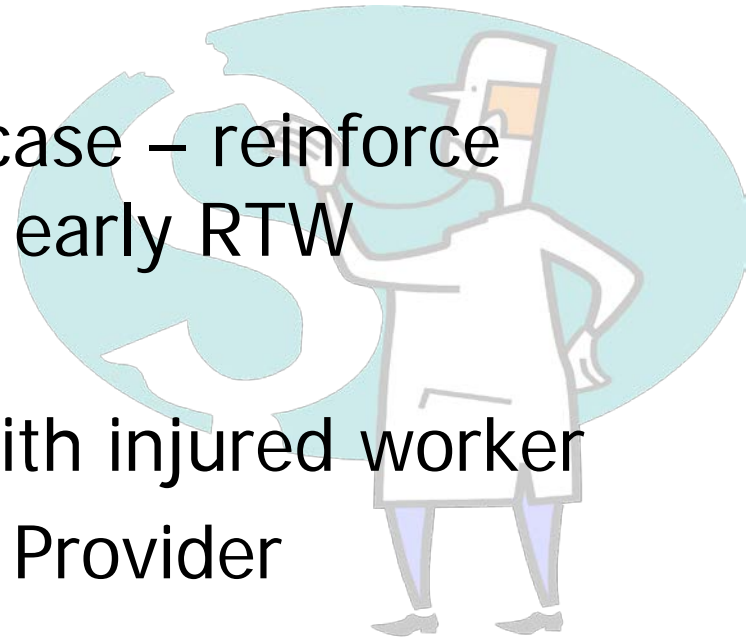
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HOW DO I TAKE THE LEAD? No 4

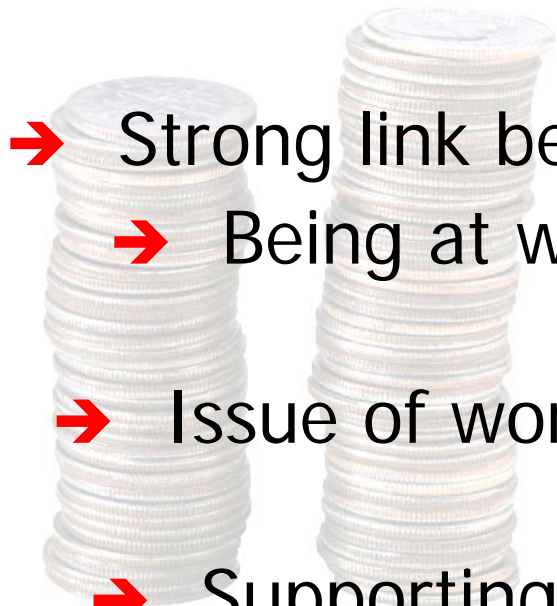
What if the Treating Doctor won't communicate?

- In NSW they have a legal responsibility to do so – advise your Agent
- Attend surgery to discuss case – reinforce company's commitment to early RTW
- Regard as an alarm bell
- Maintain communication with injured worker
- Consider referral to Rehab Provider



HOW DO I TAKE THE LEAD? No 5

What about suitable duties?

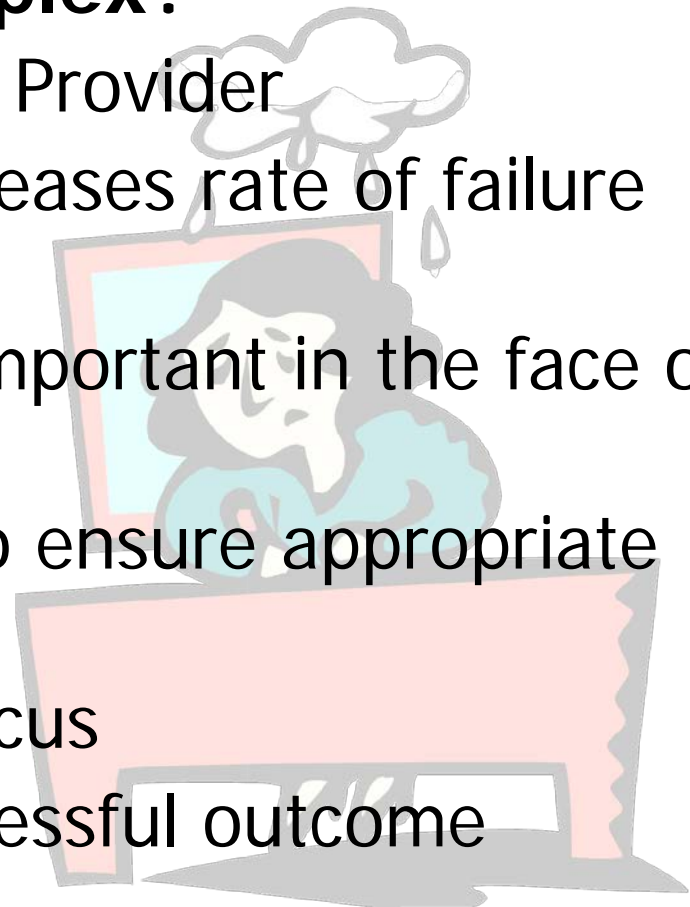
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- Be creative – impact on premium could be greater than costs of wages
 - Strong link between time off and failure of RTW
 - Being at work 2x more likely to yield positive outcome
 - Issue of workers' compensation culture – seen as opportunity for time off
 - Supporting RTW promotes goodwill with NTD



HOW DO I TAKE THE LEAD? No 6

What if the case is complex?

- Refer directly to Rehab Provider
 - ⇒ Delay to referral increases rate of failure of RTW
 - ⇒ Independent party important in the face of conflict
 - ⇒ Expertise essential to ensure appropriate duties
 - ⇒ Necessary time to focus
 - ⇒ Commitment to successful outcome





HOW DO I TAKE THE LEAD? No 7

What should I expect from a Rehab Provider?

- Prompt response and regular communication
 - Proactive i.e. don't accept unfit MC
- Balanced approach for win-win outcome
- Focus on safe, speedy and sustained RTW
 - Awareness of Yellow Flags
 - Knowledge of legislation
 - Advice on how to proceed





HOW DO I TAKE THE LEAD? No 8

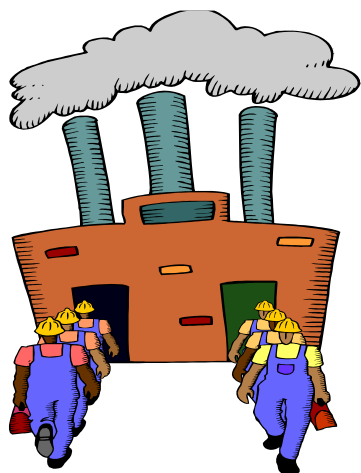
What else can I do?

- ❖ Monitor treatment such as physiotherapy, is it effective?
- ❖ Involve an Injury Management Consultant
- ❖ Consider Yellow Flags
- ❖ Are you still liable?
- ❖ Is a return to pre-injury duties still viable?
- ❖ Do you withdraw suitable duties?
- ❖ Is it time to review the goal?
- ❖ Are there alternate roles available?





HOW DO I TAKE THE LEAD? No 9



Should I Terminate?

- What is the prognosis?
- Is there a high risk of re-injury?
- When is your premium due for renewal?
- How long ago was the injury?
- What is the likelihood of re-employment?
- Have you followed due process?



HOW DO I TAKE THE LEAD? No 10

What Happens After Termination?

- ❑ Need to still be in control as wages impacting on premium within 3 years
- ❑ Obligation for injured worker to job seek
- ❑ Ensure injured worker with Rehabilitation Provider for assistance and monitoring
- ❑ RP will conduct Vocational Assessment and determine goal
- ❑ Incentives of Work Trial and Job Cover





Questions?

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