



Spinal Management Clinics



STOPS

SPECIFIC TREATMENT
OF PROBLEMS
OF THE SPINE

Optimising outcomes for workers with back pain through enhanced self- management and collaboration

Dr Jon Ford
Musculoskeletal Physiotherapist, PhD

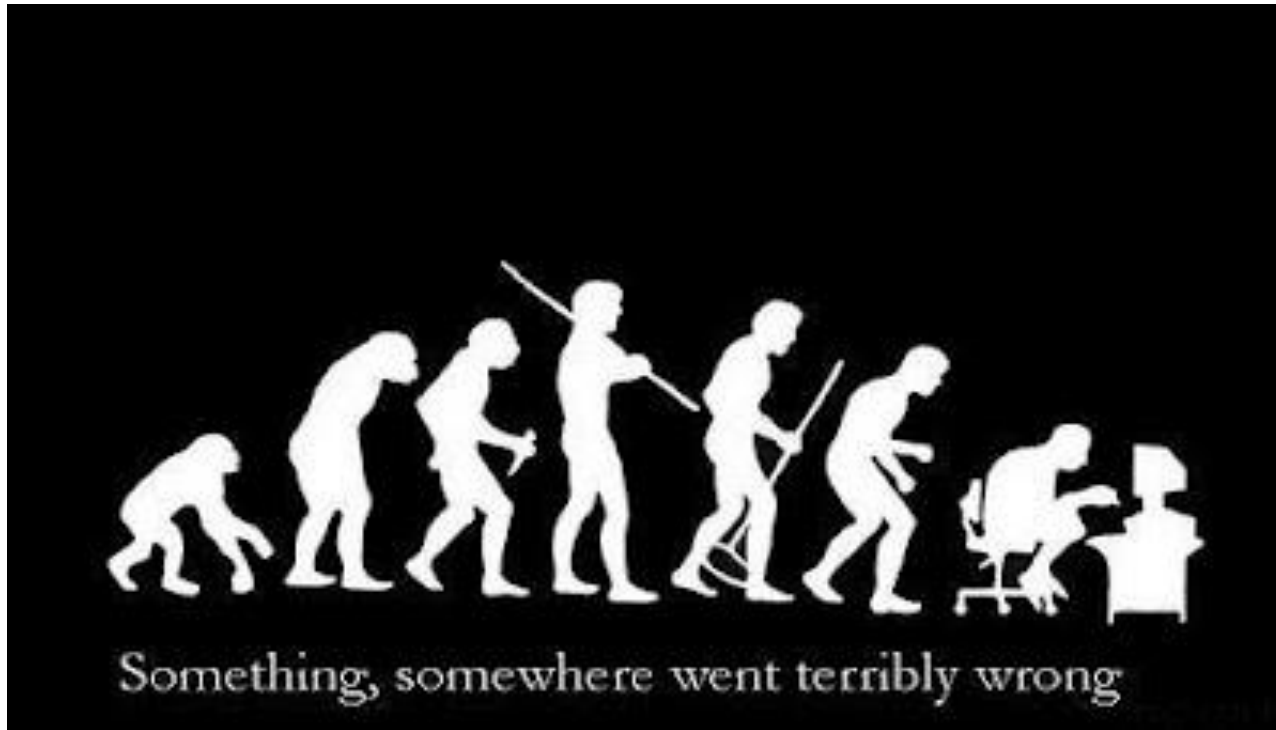
Clinical Director, Spinal Management Clinics
Team Leader, Low Back Research Team, La Trobe University

Aim of today

- Employers helping employees embrace self management strategies for their health condition
- The importance of practitioners targeting specific roadblocks to recovery and RTW
- Collaborative relationships with trusted providers
- Examples/case studies



Scope of the LBP problem



Up to 71% of people with recent onset LBP
have persisting symptoms after 12 months

Itz et al 2013



Cost of LBP

Australia per annum

- \$8.1 billion
- 62,441,052 lost work days

Dagenais et al 2008



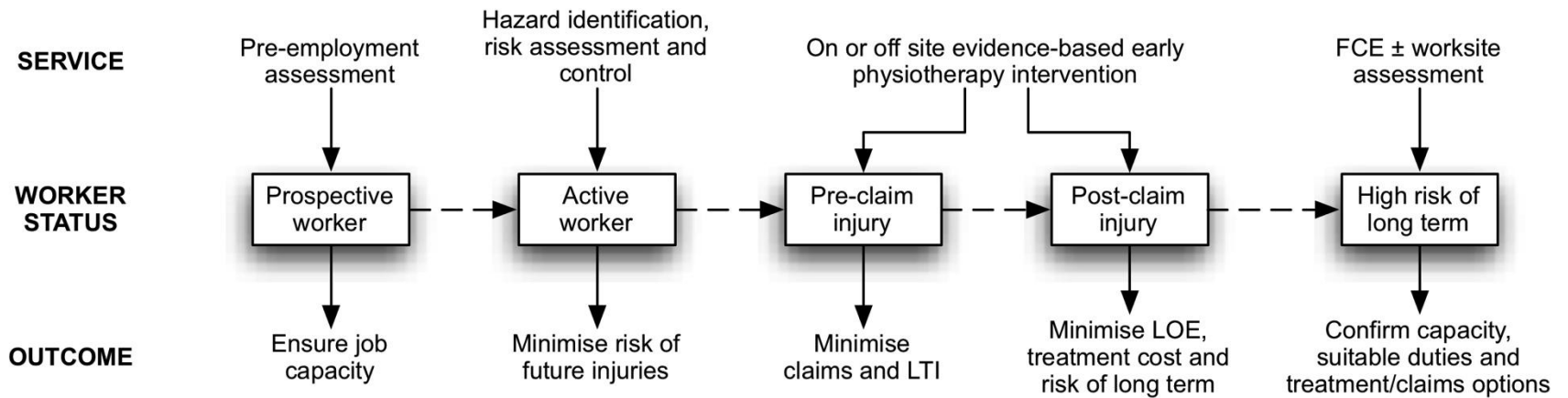
Intervention options

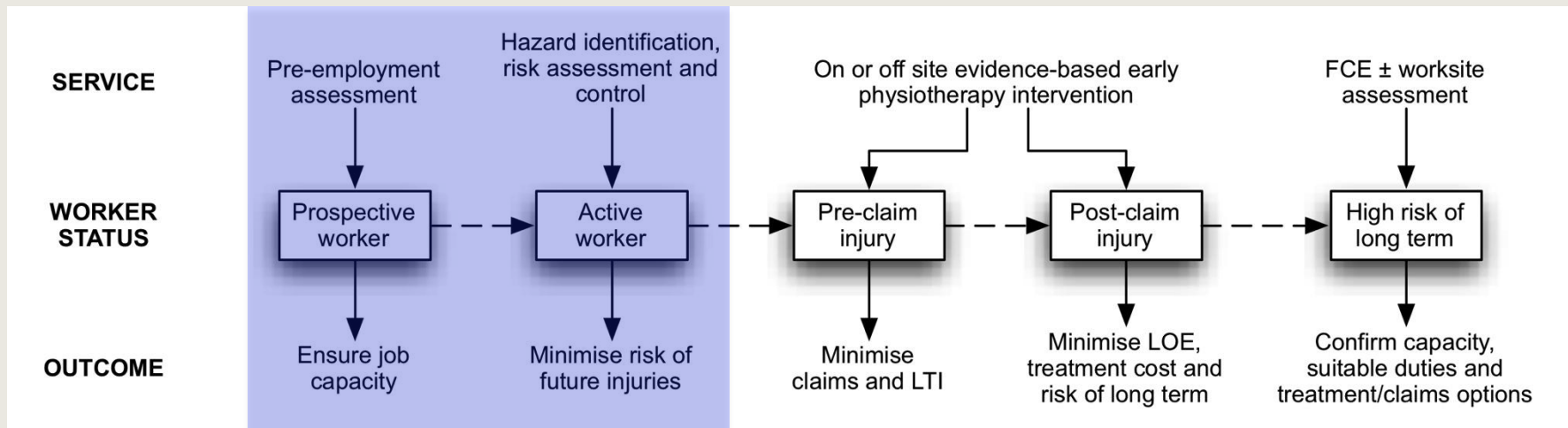
Prevent costly persistent pain/LTI

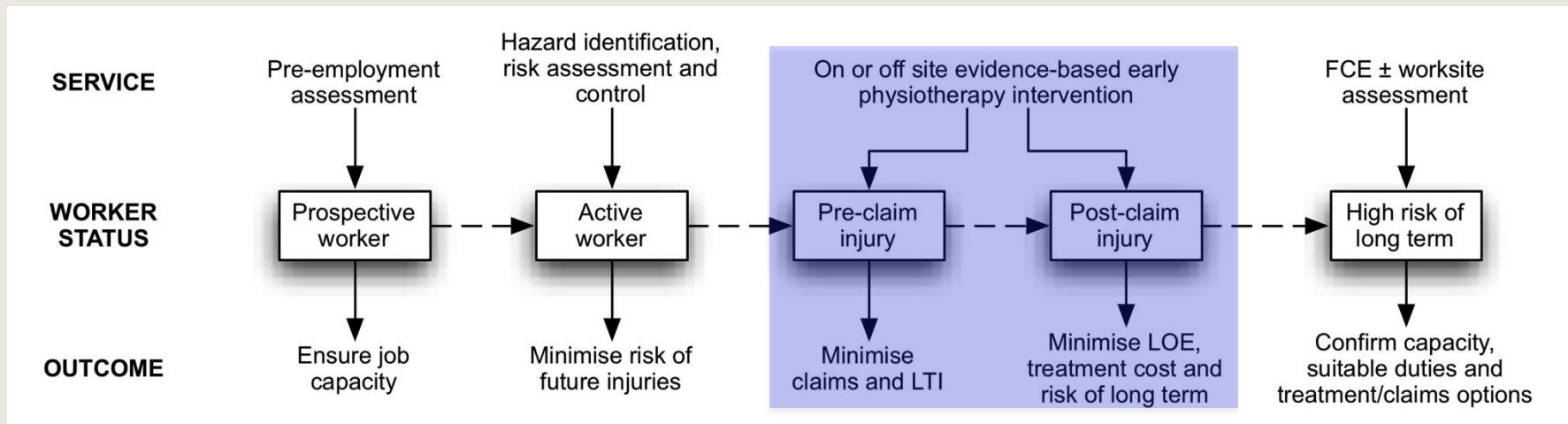
Enhance self management

Target specific barriers to recovery and RTW









Pre-claim

Employer intervention

Onsite or offsite medical and/or physiotherapy

Work or non-work related injuries

Goal

- Identify risk factors (injury, psychosocial, general health, workplace)
- Intervene minimally to make long term change
- Facilitate self management



Case study

57 year old female

Working on window assembly line 20 years

Repetitive manual handling up to 10kg

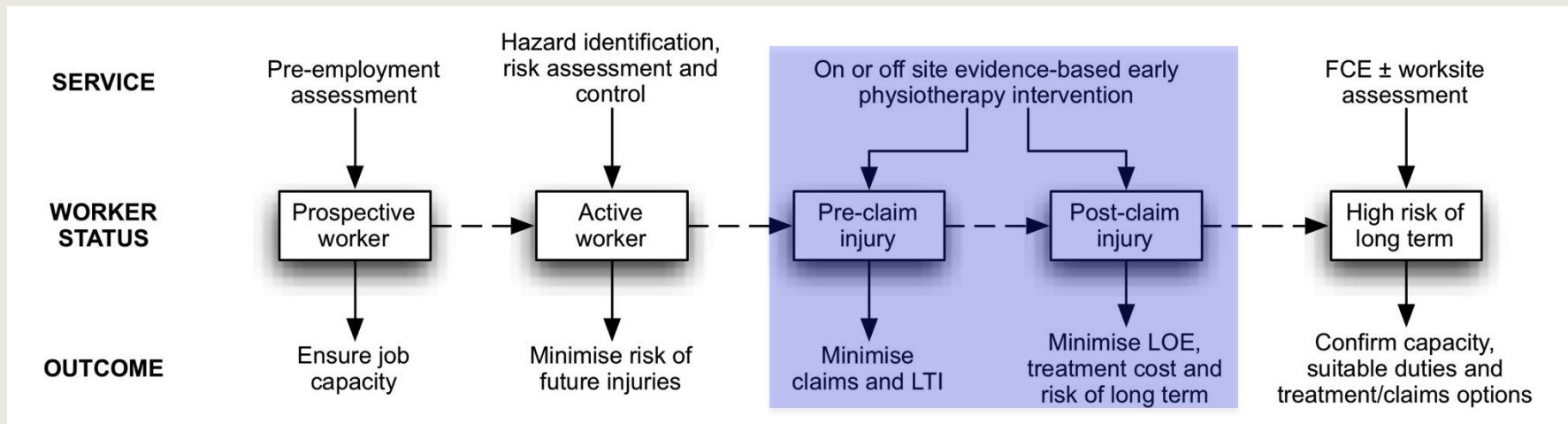
Slow onset of LBP early 2012

Meranti timber added to product line (15kg)

Symptoms deteriorated

- Claim August 2012 and LTI





Employer

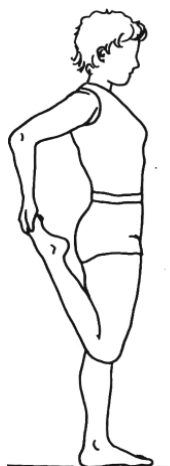
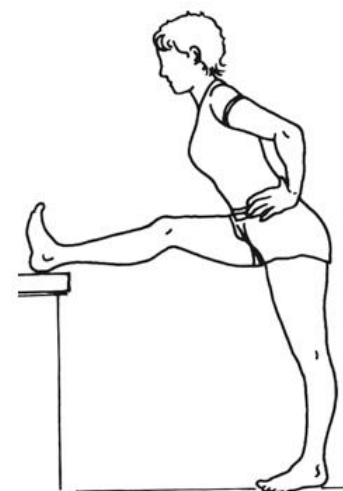
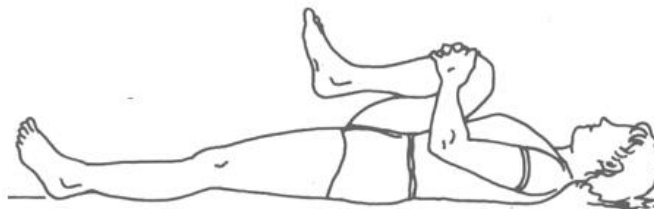
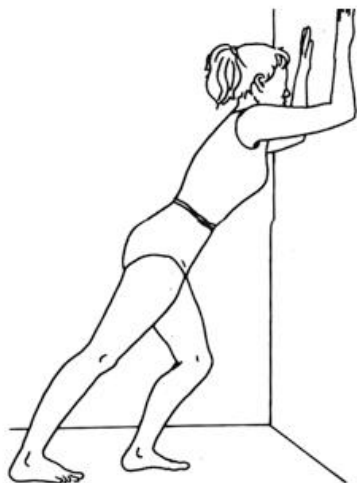
Relationships → Early identification

Evaluate worker suitability to job

Static/repetitive tasks

- Workplace modification
- **STRUCTURED EXERCISE BREAK**





Employer

Relationships → Early identification

Evaluate worker suitability to job

Static/repetitive tasks

- Workplace modification
- Structured exercise break
- **POSTURAL/LIFTING TECHNIQUE**



Manual Handling Code of Practice





ALWAYS LIFT SAFELY.



IF IT'S TOO HEAVY, ASK FOR HELP!

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Employer

Relationships → Early identification

Evaluate worker suitability to job

Static/repetitive tasks

- Workplace modification
- Structured exercise break
- Postural/lifting technique

SELF MANAGEMENT









Importance of a trusted practitioner



Employer

Trusted practitioner

Relationships → Communication

Worker suitability → FCE

Static/repetitive tasks → Advice re workplace modification, exercise break, lifting technique

Self management → Reinforce



What happened next?

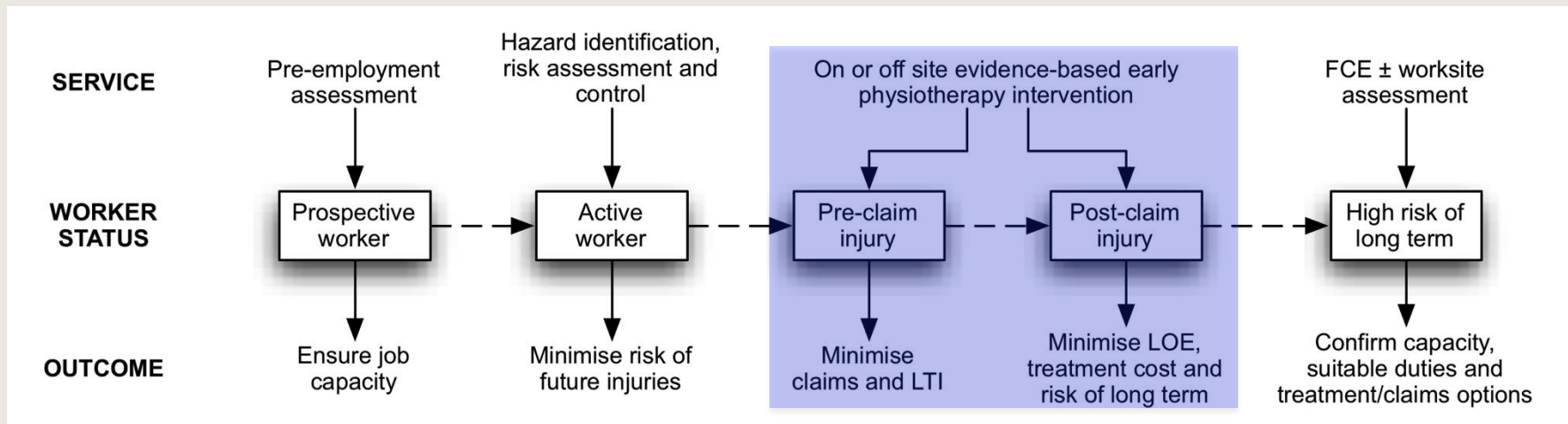
GP put worker off for 2 weeks

Pain now radiating into both hamstrings

Treatment

- Orthopaedic surgeon review Aug 2012
- Physio/hydro 5/week mostly passive
- Back brace





Employer

Relationships → Early intervention

Evaluate worker suitability to job

Early identification of yellow flags

- Clinical framework (WorkSafe)



Employer

Trusted practitioner

Relationships



Communication

Worker suitability



Certification

Yellow flags



Clinical evaluation,
education, appropriate
treatment



Case study – clinical perspective

2 weeks off work – medically necessary?

Surgical referral for back/hamstring pain?

Back brace?

High frequency, passive, ineffective treatment



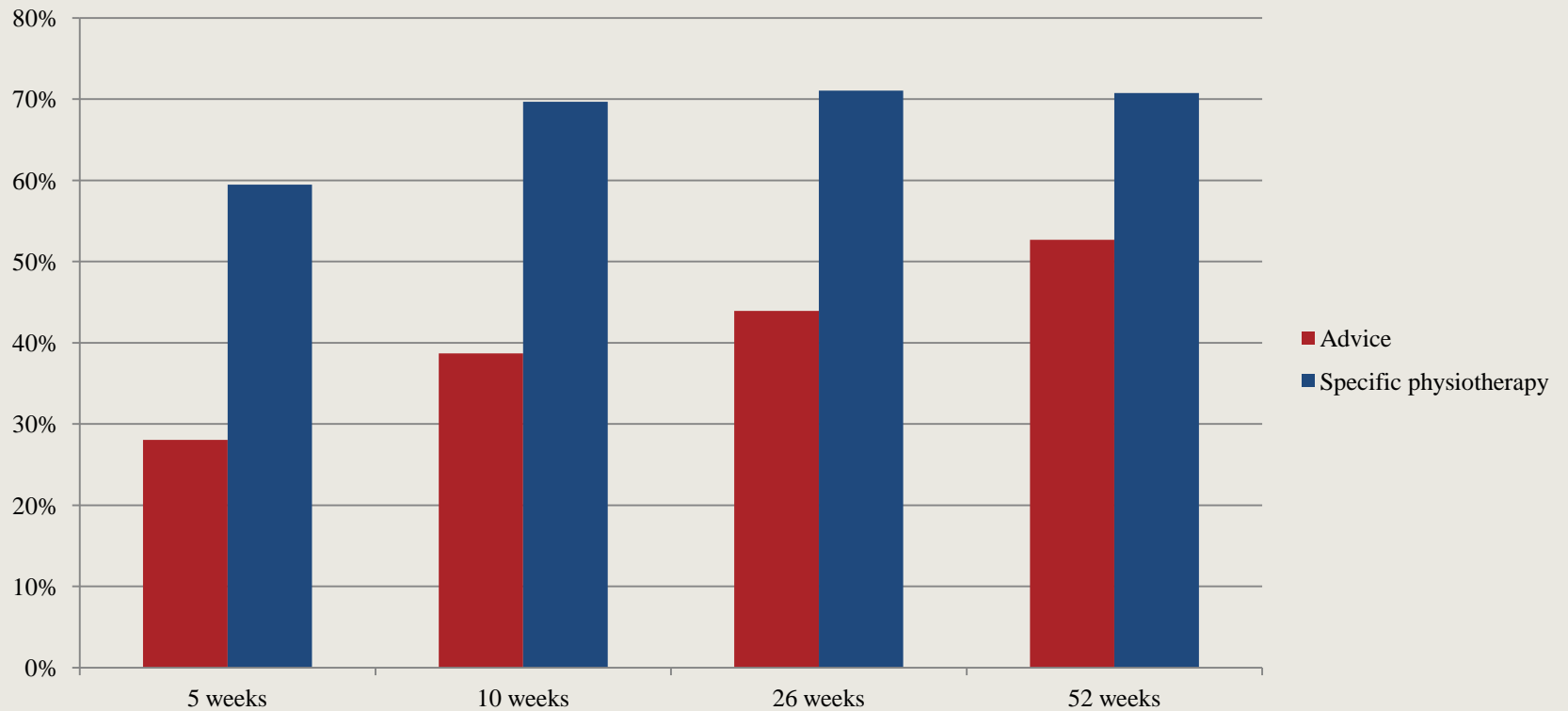
Specific physiotherapy works



STOPS

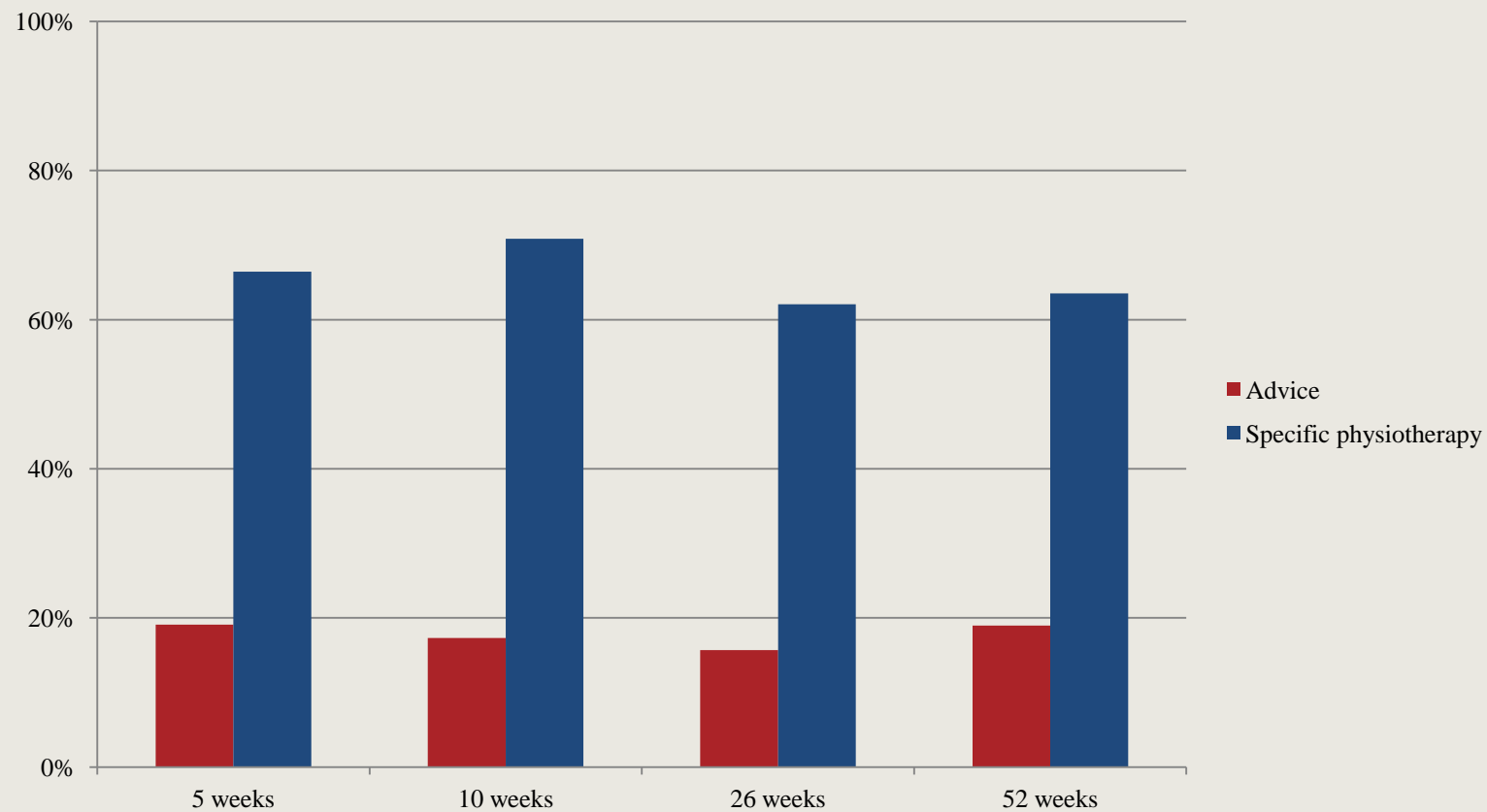
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% participants at least “much improved”





% participants at least “very satisfied”



How did she end up (Mar 2013)?

2 x 3 hours (no work on the floor, no prolonged sit/stand or repetitive bending)

Ongoing high frequency treatment

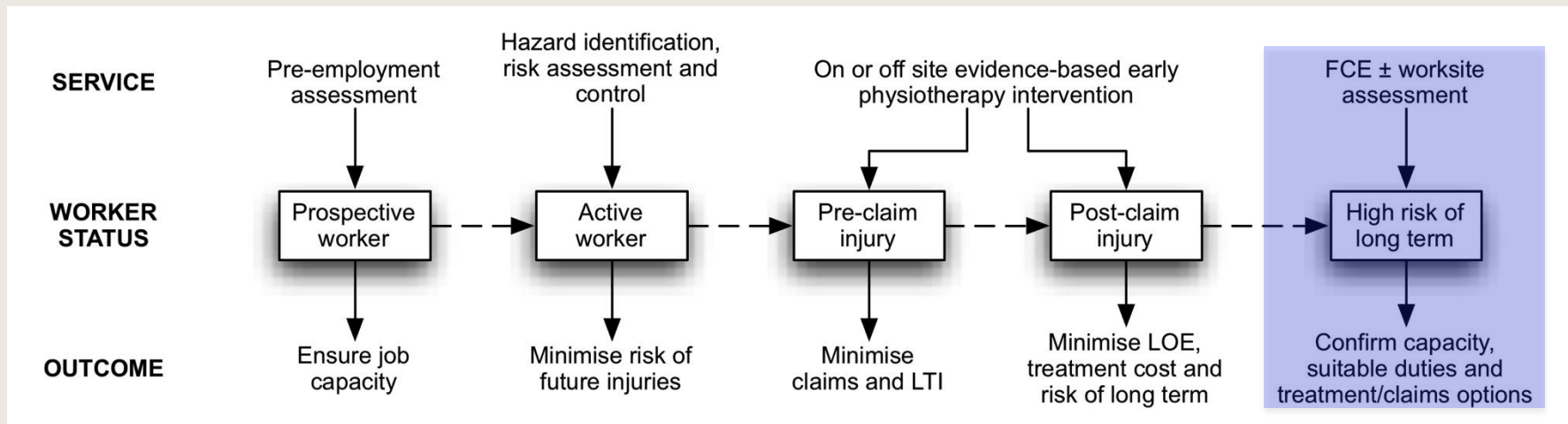
ORP involvement

Suitable duties not being provided

Put on 15kg

Worker in process of engaging lawyer





Take home message

Early intervention

- Pre-claim
- Post-claim

Employer action

Role of trusted practitioner

Today's presentation only part of a complete injury prevention/management system





Thank you

Jon Ford

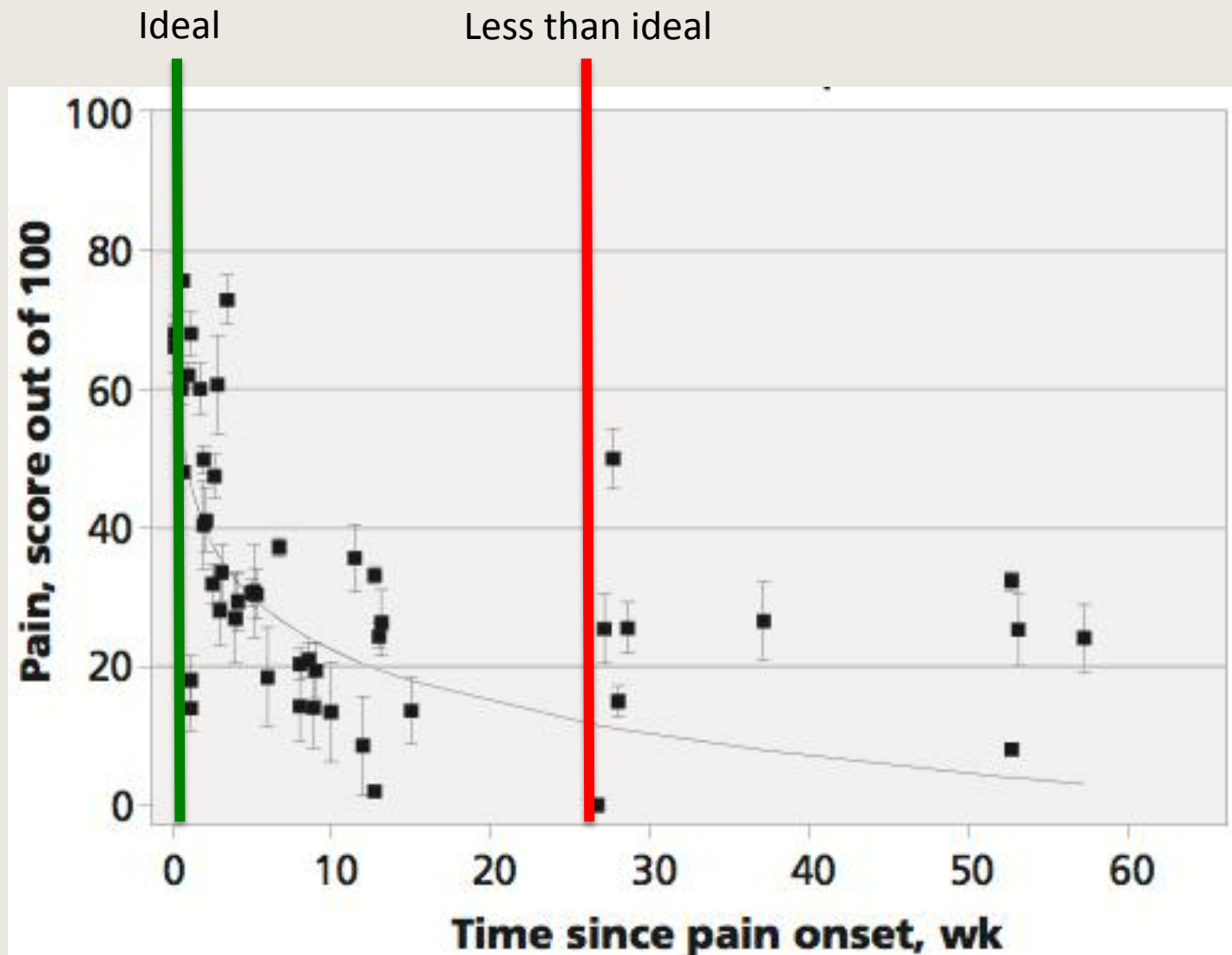
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Thank you



Costa et al 2012

Multi-disciplinary pain management

Confirmation of physical and psychosocial barriers to recovery and pre-injury RTW

Intensive rehabilitation program (medical, physiotherapy, psychology) to address barriers

Move to self management

Pain management works



Network PMP

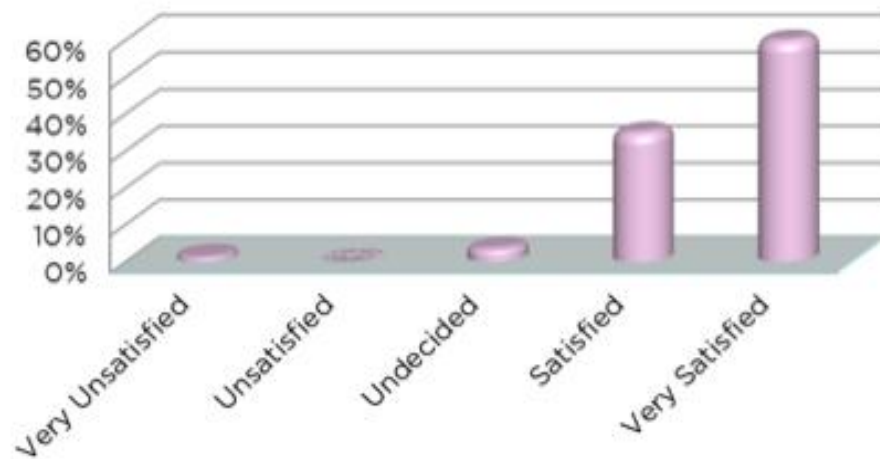
311 workers with persistent pain and complex physical/psychosocial factors

5-8 week rehabilitation program

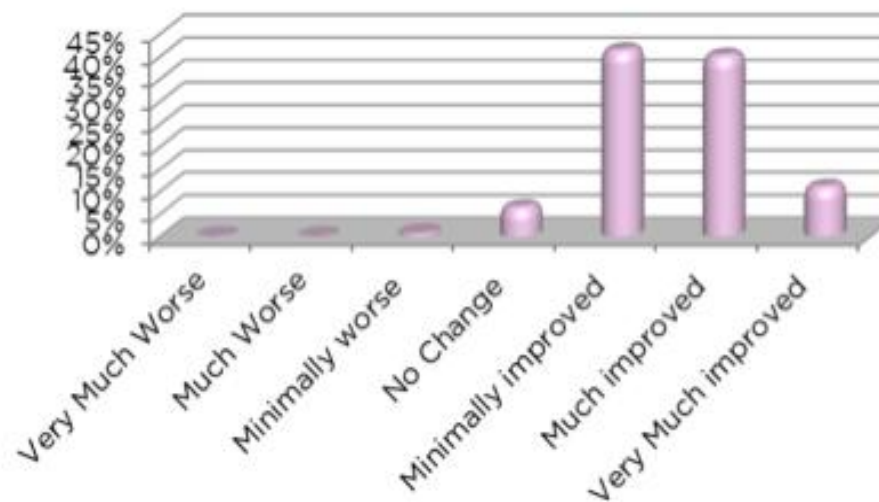
Follow up at 5 and 26-weeks post program

Compare network to “non-network” providers

Client Satisfaction



Global Impression of Change



Preferred providers

WorkSafe nominated

- Occupational Physiotherapists
- Network Pain Management Programs

Individual organisations



Work outcomes

Both network and non-network PMP resulted in improved RTW

Network PMP resulted in superior RTW outcomes

- Cost savings far outweighed the cost of the Network PMP

Several workers gained new and sustained employment after years out of the workforce

- Major cost savings

Key purpose of pre-employment is to identify factors that may limit the capacity of the applicant to complete the job...

... whilst not discriminating against the applicant

Employer

Ask screening questions

Identify risk factors

Match applicant to job

Practitioner

Medical screen

Musculoskeletal screen

Functional capacity evaluation