



## ***A guide for General Practitioners to help understand their role in the recovery process when treating injured local government workers.***

One of the first steps a person will take after injuring themselves at work is visiting their General Practitioner (GP). GPs therefore play an important role in a worker's recovery, and in collaborating with other key stakeholders for a positive return to work outcome.

Research shows that the earlier an injured worker returns to work, the greater success they will have in returning to their pre-injury role. Early intervention and talking about the health benefits of work are key. This guide shows what you can do as a GP to support your patient's recovery and return to work.



# When your patient is injured at work

As a general practitioner, your role is crucial in helping injured workers return to work. The following steps are recommended for you to assist your patient in their return to work journey.

## Patient is injured at work



### First medical review

- ▶ Issue first medical certificate assessing and certifying your patient's capacity so that their employer can identify suitable duties in the workplace
- ▶ Discuss the health benefits of work with your patient and encourage recovery at work if suitable
- ▶ Provide referral for treatment if required, including to a Workplace Rehabilitation Provider



### Return to work program

- ▶ Communicate with your patient's employer to assist with the development of a return to work program – **you are able to charge for these calls**
- ▶ Assist in identifying and addressing return to work program barriers and strategies for overcoming these

## Patient returns to work / attends treatment



### Progress medical reviews

- ▶ Review your patient's treatment and provide a progress medical certificate (based on patient capacity, not available duties)

## Patient recovers



### Final medical review

- ▶ Provide final medical certificate to your patient in order for them to finalise their claim

## FAQs

### What does your patient require to submit a workers compensation claim?

- ▶ Workers compensation claim form (obtained from their Injury Management Advisor)
- ▶ Certificate of capacity (obtained from you, their GP)

### What must be included in your medical certificates?

Medical certificates must be clear and specific. Outline what the injured worker:

- ▶ Can do (e.g. lift up to 5kg)
- ▶ Cannot do (e.g. reach forward)
- ▶ Should not do (e.g. reach overhead)
- ▶ Avoid listing specific tasks (e.g. no admin work).

### Who are LGIS?

LGIS is a not-for-profit, industry based self-insurance Scheme owned by over 150 WA Local Governments. We administer and manage workers compensation claims on behalf of

WA Local Governments, and have a team of injury management consultants who provide support to members in achieving positive return to work outcomes.

### What does local government do?

The roles and responsibilities of local government differ from state to state, but generally include infrastructure and property services (local roads, bridges, footpaths, drainage, waste collection and management), management of public recreation facilities and libraries, enforcing local laws, town planning, policy development and advocacy.

### Are alternative duties available for my patient within local government?

Due to the diversity of local government services, there is the possibility of suitable alternative duties. We recommend you discuss available duties with the local government's injury management advisor, the injured worker's supervisor, or an LGIS injury management consultant.

### Who are Workplace Rehabilitation Providers (WRP)?

WRPs are an external party, approved by WorkCover WA, who can assist the local government and injured worker with the return to work process. WRPs are commonly allied health professionals (occupational therapists, physiotherapists, psychologists) who have expertise in addressing

the physical, psychological and/or workplace barriers that may prevent an injured worker returning to work. For a full list of approved providers, see the WorkCover WA website.

### Who can refer to a WRP?

An injured worker, employer, or treating medical practitioner can initiate a referral to a WRP from the list of WorkCover approved providers. In most cases, LGIS will make the referral to a WRP on the local government's behalf. Local governments may have a WRP they have worked with previously, who is already familiar with the different duties and tasks available in their workplace. The WRP must ensure all parties agree to the referral for rehabilitation services and in all cases, the worker has the right to choose their WRP.

### When should I recommend a WRP?

Early referral to a WRP shortly after injury improves the likelihood of a successful rehabilitation program. Indicators for recommending a WRP may include:

- ▶ Difficulty in identifying suitable duties
- ▶ Nature and severity of injury
- ▶ Difficulty in determining the worker's capacity
- ▶ Modifications are required in the workplace
- ▶ If there is a need for redeployment outside the worker's current workplace
- ▶ If the return to work is not progressing as expected
- ▶ Other barriers in the workplace that may affect the return to work process (psychosocial)



**Getting your patient back to work even before they are fully recovered can help with their rehabilitation.**

## ***Need more information?***

- WorkCover WA's gpsupport website ([gpsupport.workcover.wa.gov.au](http://gpsupport.workcover.wa.gov.au)) contains resources and information specifically designed for GPs treating work-related conditions.
- Contact LGIS on 9483 8888 to talk to one of our Injury Management Consultants.

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