

Welcome

..... to the first edition of our newsletter for 2004.

In this issue we discuss the intensive case management and claims management pilots, workplace rehabilitation coordinator training and advice on coping with stress

If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact Jerome Paige on 3237 0316.



What's New in Rehab?

CLAIMS MANAGEMENT PROJECT

Education Queensland has engaged Brandon Kowitz to review and advise on state-wide WorkCover claims management practices in Education Queensland.

Brandon has started visiting regional areas and interviewing key staff including Claims Managers and Rehabilitation Consultants. Education Queensland policy & procedures on standardised claims management processes are key goals of this project.



Brandon will be providing regular updates on the project and can be contacted on 3247 3387 to discuss any aspect of claims management.

INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT PILOT UPDATE

The Intensive Case Management pilot has started well with about 20 referrals to the program so far. With funding for plenty more referrals, rehabilitation staff are urged to consider any new cases involving stress/psychological injury for intensive case management. Early intervention is the key to resolving work-related stress so Workplace Rehabilitation Coordinators and Managers/Principals are integral to identifying and referring employees who would benefit from the program. This referral should be through CSU Rehab Consultants or Employee Advisors.

Any questions regarding Intensive Case Management can be directed to Andrea Williams in the Organisational Health Unit on 3237 0729 or for general information visit the Creating Healthier Workplaces website at www.education.qld.gov.au/health/docs/icm-factsheet.doc

Workplace Rehabilitation Coordinator Training

Having a qualified rehabilitation coordinator in all workplaces with 30 or more employees and ensuring compliance with the Act is not an easy feat in an organisation as large as ours, and the efforts of all districts to assist in achieving compliance is appreciated. In order to help achieve this, Workplace Rehabilitation Coordinator training is being organised in various locations across the State.

Location	Course Type	Date
Rockhampton	1 day WPRC recertification	15 March 2004
Rockhampton	3 day WPRC	16/17/18 March 2004
Toowoomba	1 day WPRC recertification	5 April 2004
Toowoomba	3 day WPRC	6/7/8 April 2004
Murrumba Downs	1 day WPRC recertification	20 April 2004
Murrumba Downs	3 day WPRC	21/22/23 April 2004
Stafford	3 day WPRC	10/11/12 May 2004
Stafford	1 day WPRC recertification	13 May 2004
Maroochydore	1 day WPRC recertification	28 May 2004
Mackay	3 day WPRC	1/2/3 June 2004
Mackay	1 day WPRC recertification	4 June 2004
Bundaberg	1 day WPRC recertification	21 June 2004
Bundaberg	3 day WPRC	22/23/24 June 2004
Townsville	1 day WPRC recertification	19 July 2004
Townsville	3 day WPRC	20/21/22 July 2004
Ipswich	1 day WPRC recertification	26 July 2004
Ipswich	3 day WPRC	27/28/29 July 2004
Mount Isa	1 day WPRC recertification	30 July 2004

Please contact your CSU Rehabilitation Consultant for further information on courses offered.

Coping with Stress

Stress is something we all encounter. Life changes, such as moving house, getting married or coping with a bereavement, can all cause it, while negative social conditions, such as unemployment, poor housing, noisy neighbours, relationship problems and difficulties at work, can also contribute. However, stress also has a positive side. A certain level of stress may be necessary and enjoyable in order to spark us into action.

Stress means different things to different people. A situation that is intolerable to one person may be stimulating to another. What you feel is determined not just by events and changes in the outside world, but how you perceive and respond to them.

As stress begins to take its toll physically, emotionally and on your behaviour, a variety of symptoms can result.

How your body may react

- breathlessness
- chest pains
- constant tiredness
- constipation or diarrhoea
- cramps or muscle spasms
- high blood pressure
- dizziness
- fainting spells
- frequent crying
- indigestion or heartburn
- restlessness
- a tendency to sweat
- headaches
- lack of appetite
- sleeping problems

How you may feel

- aggressive
- irritable
- depressed
- dreading the future
- taking no interest in life
- loss of sense of humour
- loss of interest in others
- fearing disease
- fearing failure

How you may behave

- difficulty in making decisions
- inability to show true feelings
- denying there's a problem
- avoid difficult situations
- difficulty concentrating

What is the best way to handle pressure?

Remember a little bit of stress is good for the body and alerts the mind. The following may enable you to deal with it more effectively.

- manage your time
- act positively
- deep breathing
- simple relaxation
- healthy eating
- regular exercise
- have fun & laugh
- de-clutter your life



A good website on this topic is: <http://www.mind.org.uk>



Frequently Asked Questions

Q.1. Does an employee have an obligation to participate in rehabilitation when on Workers' Compensation?

Yes. It is a legislative requirement for a worker to participate in rehabilitation.

1. The worker must satisfactorily participate in rehabilitation:
 - a) as soon as practicable after the injury is sustained; and
 - b) for the period for which the worker is entitled to compensation

Q.2. Is it a mandatory requirement for a witness nominated for a WorkCover claim interview to participate?

Witnesses nominated by the employee applying for Workers' Compensation do not have to participate in the interview process. However, participation by witnesses does assist WorkCover in making an accurate determination of the claim. The Department of Education and the Arts is able to direct an employee to provide a statement to WorkCover under the Industrial Relations Act. Witnesses are able to request a copy of their statement from WorkCover.

WPRC Profile

Organisational Health is considered to be an important function for all staff at Tooolooa State High School. The team of WHSO and two trained Rehabilitation Co-ordinators ensure that the school is a safe and healthy environment for all staff and students. The CSU Rehabilitation Consultants complement the school's Rehabilitation Coordinators on different projects i.e. rehabilitation programs, presentations at staff meetings and information updates.

The two trained Rehabilitation Co-ordinators; Raelene Fysh and Jenny Prizeman acknowledge the benefits that early intervention provides. The main benefit, besides offering greater opportunities for ill or injured workers to maintain or return to work, "allows us to keep skilled employees at work and also reinforces the value we place on our staff". Feedback from staff who have accessed rehabilitation services has been extremely positive and productive.



The school also supports Workplace Health and Safety activities by providing additional non teaching time for the trained Workplace Health and Safety Officer to work on identified priorities.

Health & Safety

Recent changes to the Workplace Health and Safety Act will impact on the recording and reporting of injuries, illnesses and dangerous events.

The primary change affecting rehabilitation is the definition of a "serious bodily injury". The definition change impacts on the requirement to notify the regulatory authority – Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ).

Workplaces are no longer required to notify WHSQ if a person's work caused injury or illness requires an overnight stay in hospital. Notification to WHSQ is now required if the person's work caused injury or illness requires them to be away from paid or voluntary work for more than 4 days.

All claims for workers compensation must be accompanied by an official Injury/Illness/Dangerous Event form to ensure that departmental information is consistent with WorkCover information.



Creating Healthier Workplaces

Organisational Health Unit