

φphysica

WORKPLACE HEALTH



Injury prevention, treatment and return to work plans

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What is Physica Workplace Health?

Physica Workplace Health is a physiotherapy based answer to industrial health problems. Physica is able to provide a variety of solutions for injuries in the workplace.

These solutions may include:

- On-site and clinic treatments
- Workplace ergonomic assessments
- Manual handling training
- Injury prevention programs
- Workplace job descriptions
- Return to work plans
- Functional capacity assessments
- Pre-employment screenings
- Work hardening strengthening programs
- Health awareness programs
- Chronic pain classes
- Health statistics

The physiotherapists at Physica have experience in an occupational health setting and work with many industries around Tasmania. Whatever your workplace needs, we can help supply a solution.

Assessment & Treatment

Following an injury, Physica is able to provide physiotherapy assessment and treatment at any of our five practices around northern Tasmania on that same day or the following day. Physica is able to organise a physiotherapist to visit your workplace on a regular basis to provide on-site physiotherapy treatment and workplace assessments if required.

Due to the experience and knowledge of the physiotherapists at Physica, any condition can be treated effectively, and the injured employee returned to work sooner. Even non-musculoskeletal medical conditions can be treated by physiotherapists to help maintain function and keep employees at work.

Following a physiotherapist appointment, the Physica physiotherapist will send an update to the workplace and treating doctor (if applicable) detailing what the issue is, an approximate time frame for recovery, the number of treatments required and what restrictions the employee will have (if not already put in place by the doctor). This will help you know the recovery plan for the employee and ensure that all parties are coordinated in returning the employee back to work as soon as possible.



Injury Prevention

Physica can help prevent injuries or aid an employee's return to work by assessing workplaces for manual handling risks or high injury activities. Physiotherapists have been trained by Physica to objectively assess workstations and provide variety of solutions that would best suit your business. This may include discussions about the layout of the workstation, the way the job is completed or the use of mechanical aids which reduce the load on the body.

This is completed using the following steps:

- Objectively measuring the forces at the workplace
- Assessing the areas of the body at risk
- Assessing additional factors such as vibration, environmental conditions and body position
- Determine a level of risk.

A variety of solutions will be offered following the hierarchy of controls:

- Elimination
- Substitution
- Engineering controls
- Administrative controls
- Personal protective equipment.

A more effective solution for your business will be implemented and trialed for a period. This trial will be reassessed to ensure that the risk has been controlled and no new risk has arisen.

Manual Handling Training

Physica has tertiary qualified exercise physiologists and physiotherapists that can help prevent injuries in situations where the workplace cannot be altered to prevent injury.

- Objective assessment of workplace
- Individualised manual handling training program will be developed
- Roll out program to the employees
- Reassess to ensure that risks have been reduced

The manual handling program is set up with two main focus, the first is to educate the employees on the principles of manual handling. This is followed by a work specific manual training session that will look at tasks that are completed at the workplace that have a manual handling risk and teach the employees how to safely complete those tasks.

To help reduce the risk of injury with manual tasks, it is important to warm up and prepare the body for work. A workplace warm up routine can be developed by trained physiotherapists for specific jobs or tasks and rolled out in the workplace. This can then be completed each day by the employee before starting work.

Reducing the risk of workplace injuries



Returning the employee to work sooner



Individualised training programs



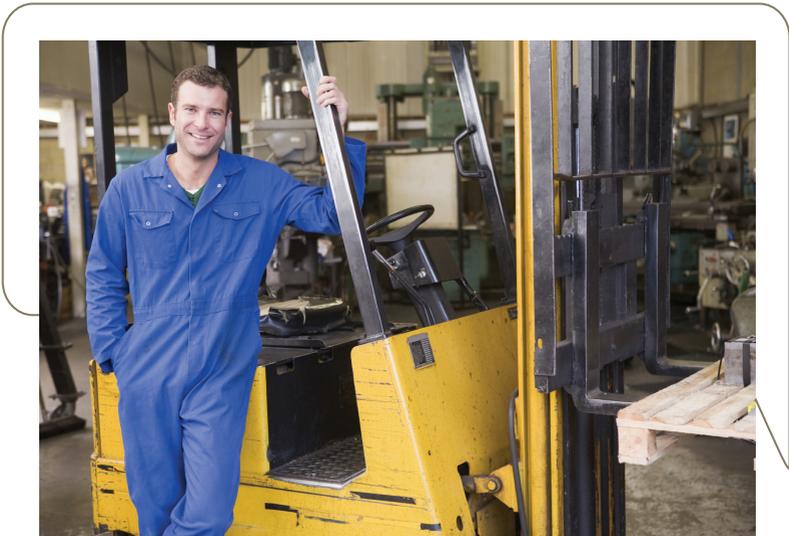
Return to Work Plans

Research has found that working is an essential part of recovery for an injured worker. However, it must be completed safely as to prevent further injury or aggravating the symptoms.

Physica has fully trained Return to Work Co-ordinators that can assist with returning employees to the workplace. This may include:

- Assessments of the workplace
- Objective testing of the employee's ability
- Developing return to work plans

Return to work plans can be done in conjunction with doctor's recommendations to ensure that all parties are working to return a worker safely back to the workplace. The employee and employer will be communicated with at all times to help overcome any barriers and identify any issues that arise as the employee returns to work.



Work Hardening Strengthening Programs

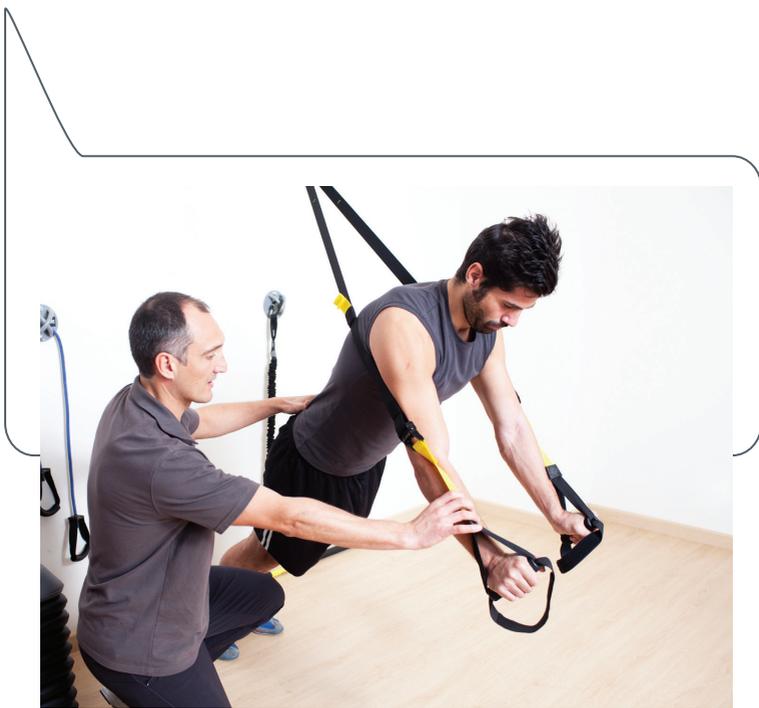
Qualified exercise physiologists are also able to aid employee's return to work by setting up objectively measured gym-based strengthening programs.

- An initial assessment will determine their current physical limitations and what muscular ability the employee needs to return to work on full duties.
- A gym program will be developed to address the limitations and progress towards the functional work goals.
- The employee will continue with the program in a partially supervised environment to ensure that the exercises are done safely and the injury is not aggravated.
- Weekly follow-up sessions will progress the program as well as reassess to ensure the employee is on track.

The employee's increase in functional ability as demonstrated in the gym setting will be communicated to the employer and doctor to allow the duties at work to be safely progressed. A discharge report will be sent to the employer and doctor allowing the employee to return to routine duties or advising what needs to be completed before the employee can return to routine duties if they have not been able to demonstrate that ability yet.

Clinical pilates sessions are also available to increase core stability and strength following a back injury.





Functional Capacity Evaluations

If an employee has been off work for an extended period of time or if a more detailed indication of their level of injury is needed, a functional capacity evaluation should be completed.

Physica has trained physiotherapists who conduct functional capacity evaluations to give the best indication of an employee's ability to work or return to the workplace in the future. A report is developed which covers all aspects of the employee's functional ability and how their injury is impacting them. This report gives recommendations as to how best help the employee back to work and what services they need to overcome their injury.

One-off, simple assessments can also be completed to advise workplaces of an employee's ability to complete certain tasks. These assessments are completed in a shorter time and do not give a complete picture of the employee's injury, but they are very helpful for less complex cases.

Health Awareness

A healthy workforce gets injured less, takes less sick days and is generally more productive.

Health issues that can be addressed are:

- Diabetes
- Weight issues
- Exercise
- Depression
- Cardiovascular disease

Addressing health issues is important to prevent secondary problems such as chronic pain, back pain and muscular injuries.

Physica is able to provide talks or training at your workplace to cover any topical health issues. This information session can include assessments such as blood pressure checks or health assessments. If the employee is at risk, they will be advised to see their own doctor for further tests and given a brief report which advises the doctor of the findings.



Chronic Pain Class

Workers who suffer from persistent or ongoing pain can have trouble returning to work and often develop psychological and sociological barriers to recovery. This can cause their recovery to take longer than expected and may respond poorly from standard pain relieving treatments.

Physica offers a multidisciplinary approach to chronic pain management that includes a small group talk.

This session educates workers who suffer from chronic pain on:

- To emphasise that pain is real and not imagined, and is an emotion the brain has decided to construct on receiving information from the injured area
- To understand that painful doesn't necessarily mean harmful
- Pain levels may be influenced by what is happening in a person's world and how they are dealing with it, rather than from serious pathology
- How to unlock the drug cabinet in the brain and reduce pain levels with knowledge, setting of personal goals, pacing and carrying out a self-managed exercise program.

Research has shown that this approach has better outcomes for chronic pain sufferers and returns them to work sooner.

Health Statistics

To help determine if Physica's Corporate Health Program is working effectively in your workplace, statistics will be taken to identify areas that would help your business and ensure that you are receiving the best possible service. These statistics will be supplied to you to help identify the areas of health risk within your business.



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