



IN THIS ISSUE:

- Positive start for workplace rehabilitation services
- Safety NZ Week
- Stay at Work goes nationwide
- New ambulance strategy
- Health Practitioner Index
- PMS changes for electronic ACC invoices
- Upcoming conferences and events
- Obtain Employment service trial
- Attitude Awards

Positive start for workplace rehabilitation services

Early indications from ACC's Taupo-based PHO 'Better@Work' service, augur well for the future of the workplace rehabilitation programme.

Lake Taupo PHO has been providing Better@Work services for clients and their employers since 2 March 2009, and the first progress report shows promising results. In a two-month period, 42% of clients returned to work in fewer than seven days compared with 34% in 2007. As a result, the average number of days off work for injured clients returning to work within 30 days has reduced from 17.1 to 13 days.

"To isolate any distorting 'Taupo effect', we compared the Taupo GPs' performance with historic records and three locations where the demographics and weekly compensation costs are similar," says Dr Kevin Morris, ACC Business Owner Health Purchasing & Provider Relations. "In those sites the number of days off work in the same period rose to 18.

"However, while it's a great result, it isn't yet a trend. We'll need several months of hard data before we can confirm how well the initiative is operating. But having discussed in detail the practical clinical aspects of following 'better at work' principles, I've found strong support among Lake Taupo PHO GPs and a willingness to change their approach to certification when they're confident their clients can safely return to work."

Research shows that the sooner someone can get back to work, the better off they are clinically, socially and financially. Staying at work, or returning as quickly as possible, also benefits everyone by protecting the sustainability of the ACC scheme.

Safety NZ Week

Safety NZ Week is back and this year it's going to be more exciting than ever.

Between 7 and 13 September, the Week will again focus on home safety and how so many of the injuries that happen in the home can easily be avoided. It's based on some shocking statistics: last year more than 650,000 people were injured in the home, with 25,000 needing hospital treatment and, tragically, more than approximately 600 people dying.

ACC has now joined forces with other government departments and businesses to work together on one goal – to reduce the impact of home injuries on New Zealand.

Anyone can get involved; simply visit www.homesafety.co.nz to find out how. The site includes a number of tools to get you started, including posters, presentations and leaflets, plus a new online home safety tool that could save your life.

Stay at Work goes nationwide

Stay at Work went live on 1 July, with providers throughout the country now available to offer services designed to help people gain the benefits of rehabilitating at work.

The service focuses on bringing GPs, employers and their injured employees together with the ACC Stay at Work service provider to identify how the employee can safely and quickly return to work.

This may involve a shift to light duties, provision of personal supports such as wheelchairs and crutches etc, installation of workplace supports or other measures. Based on the philosophy that injured employees are more likely to get better at work, the service covers the spectrum of injuries by tailoring interventions to the

specific needs of the injured employee.

Stay at Work service providers are experts in their field of vocational rehabilitation. Recent results from a successful trial carried out in Counties-Manukau showed that they are winning the trust of GPs in the region.

Often regarded as the sole preserve of the treatment provider, GP work certification is now becoming a matter of discussion between team members looking to identify what the injured employee can do, rather than what they cannot do. As a result, GPs have been increasingly willing to re-consider time off work certification in the confidence that patients are able to safely rehabilitate in the workplace.

New ambulance strategy

On 4 June the Minister of Health Tony Ryall announced a package of new initiatives for the New Zealand ambulance sector, while also launching the New Zealand Ambulance Service Strategy on behalf of he and Associate Minister for ACC Pansy Wong.

The new initiatives provide additional resources for critical front-line ambulance services, including:

- 100 new paramedics
- additional support for training rural volunteers to the introductory level of emergency care (Basic Life Support)
- support for registration of paramedics under the Health Practitioner Competence Assurance Act 2003
- additional support for the air rescue sector.

These initiatives emerged from consultation on the New Zealand Ambulance Service Strategy, which has three key goals to be achieved by 2020:

- Strategic Leadership: ensure that the ambulance sector has clearly defined roles in the emergency and health sectors
- Community Resilience: deliver a long-term plan for meeting community emergency health needs
- Seamless Delivery: integrate ambulance services within the wider health sector.

The Ministers announced funding of \$48 million over the next four years to progress the initiatives and the strategy. They also acknowledged that these funds had been provided for in Budget announcements by the previous Government.

Health Practitioner Index

ACC has started implementing 'identifier codes' for the Health Practitioner Index (HPI) – a database and directory of health practitioners, facilities and organisations that either fund or deliver health and/or disability services.

The Index will enable these unique identifier codes to be used to describe – for any given health transaction – the practitioner, the delivery location and the organisation where the transaction occurred. It uses information about health practitioners from trusted sources listed in the Health Practitioner Competence Assurance Act 2003 (which includes the Medical Council of New Zealand).

The HPI has three identifier codes:

- HPI-CPN (common person number)
- HPI-FAC (service delivery facility)
- HPI-ORG (funding organisation).

As a treatment provider, you'll use your HPI-CPN code instead of, and in the same way as, your ACC provider number. And thanks to the consolidation of multiple identifiers, you'll no longer have to remember which ACC provider number to use when you work in more than one practice!

Some providers, facilities and organisations new to ACC are being registered using their HPI identifiers now. Existing ACC-registered providers will be moved to HPI identifiers eventually – we'll let you know when your ACC provider number has changed.

You can find more information on the HPI at www.nzhis.govt.nz or by emailing HPI-Administrator@moh.govt.nz. If you have any ACC-related questions about it, please email registrations@acc.co.nz.

ACC NEWS feedback:

We would appreciate your feedback about ACC News. Please email us at feedback@acc.co.nz.

PMS changes for electronic ACC invoices

ACC is working with some of the major practice management system (PMS) vendors to streamline the way that we receive electronically submitted invoices.

Currently, most PMSs are set up to send invoices indirectly to ACC via HealthLink. However, this method is gradually being phased out so that all PMSs send invoices directly to the ACC eSchedule website via the internet. This change will simplify the process and enable all services to be invoiced electronically. You'll also be able to access your remittance advices online.

If this affects you and you already have a certificate for electronically lodging ACC45 Injury Claim Forms, you'll use the same one for eSchedule. Otherwise, you can apply for a Digital Certificate to access the eSchedule system.

The change will be implemented gradually as PMS vendors upgrade their systems. At the same time, sites will move to using the Health Practitioner Index, which will be built into the upgraded systems.

If you have any queries, please contact the ACC eBusiness Team on 0800 222 994 (option 1).

Upcoming conferences and events

21-25 July – 2009 **AFRM/NIRR/NZRA Rehabilitation Conference**, 'Working together across the lifespan – An interdisciplinary approach to rehabilitation', Rydges Hotel, Queenstown. www.rehabconference2009.org.nz

23-26 July – **The New Zealand Pain Society Annual Scientific Meeting**, Distinction Rotorua Hotel, Rotorua. www.confer.co.nz/pain2009

20-22 August – **New Zealand Dental Association Regional Conference**, Wellington Convention Centre. www.conference.co.nz/index.cfm/NZDA09/

27-30 August – **College of Emergency Nurses NZ-NZNO & NZ Flight Nurses Association Annual Conference** 2009, Hotel Grand Chancellor, Christchurch. www.conference2009.co.nz

9-12 September – **Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners Conference**, Duxton Hotel, Wellington www.conference.co.nz/index.cfm/RNZCGP09

17-19 September – **New Zealand Association of Counsellors**, Federated Farmers Building, Hamilton. www.nzac.org.nz

22-25 September – **Australian and New Zealand Burn Association 2009 Scientific Meeting**, Te Papa, Wellington. www.confer.co.nz/anzba09/

Obtain Employment service trial

The 'Obtain Employment' service, which is designed for clients unable to return to their pre-injury job, is being trialled in the lower South Island – at ACC's Alexandra, Timaru and Dunedin branches from 1 July, and at the Invercargill branch from December.

Some services in the region will be replaced by the new Obtain Employment service. There'll be a three-month transition period to enable clients currently receiving the replaced services to finish their rehabilitation.

The Work Hardening, Functional Capacity Evaluation and Transitional Job Search services in the trial areas will continue, however may receive fewer referrals as clients will receive their rehabilitation under the new Obtain Employment service.

Depending on the results of the trial, the Obtain Employment service may be implemented in other parts of the country.

Attitude Awards

Entries are now open for the 2009 Attitude Awards, which showcase the fantastic achievements of people with disabilities.

ACC is the major sponsor of the Awards, which are a joint initiative between Parafed Auckland and RSVP Productions, the company that produces the weekly TV series 'Attitude'.

The Awards recognise individuals or groups who have not let disability stop them achieving the truly outstanding. There are

nine categories, including the Sport Performer of the Year Award, the Community Award, and the Attitude ACC Employer Award.

Please enter anyone you know who:

- has a disability and deserves recognition for their outstanding attitude
- is an employer who does outstanding work with disabled employees.

Entry forms and more information are available at www.disabilitytv.com/awards.