



# Case Studies

## Rehab Pathway Planning

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### About this document

The purpose of these case studies is to present a scenario and what might be considered a good practice approach to manage it based on the intent of ICPMSK. This is not necessarily the only possible way of managing the presented situation but is intended to present an example. If you are reviewing the Case Study as part of the onboarding process prior to commencing the ICPMSK contract, you will have the opportunity to attend a follow-up discussion, where you can ask questions about the Case Study if required or listen to the discussion based on questions and comments from other providers.

### Case Study One

*This case study is to demonstrate how information gathered from the kiritaki at entry and triage into the service may be used to help inform a Recovery Plan, following the structure of the 'Rehabilitation Pathway Planning' guidance document. Work through part 1, considering what goals the kiritaki may identify, as well as taking note of any issues or barriers and how you might address these, before checking this against the remainder of the case study.*

### Part 1 – Understanding the kiritaki and their circumstances

Ngaire is a 30-year-old kiritaki who works as a delivery driver in Hastings. She sustained an injury when lifting heavy materials at work in October. She advised she was bending and rotating to place the boxes into the van. She was initially diagnosed with a lumbar sprain. Triage assessment confirms she has sustained a lumbar disc prolapse with left sided radiculopathy and she is accepted onto the pathway. The prospect that surgery may be required if recovery doesn't progress was discussed with the orthopaedic surgeon, and Ngaire is very keen to avoid surgery if possible. She's been advised to mix activity she can manage with periods of rest and take pain medication but had a bad day recently where the leg pain flared up. She reports she's been staying in bed as much as possible since, hoping this will help resolve it faster.

Ngaire has a partner, Jordan, and a four-year-old son Mikaere, who has just started school and has been struggling to adjust to it. Prior to her injury, Ngaire would help Mikaere to get ready and take him to school each morning on her way to the depot. Jordan works long hours from home as a graphic designer. Ngaire and Jordan shared domestic responsibilities based on their work schedules, and they have no other whanau in the area.

Ngaire has been busy with work and her whanau but is part of a running club at the weekend which she is eager to get back to, as they had been planning to enter the Hawkes Bay marathon together in May next year.

Ngaire is eager to be earning again as soon as possible – she and Jordan are generally managing their mortgage and bills okay, but Ngaire is concerned that being on reduced income may mean they need to cut back on costs in the run-up to Christmas.

The ICP Navigator has called Maree, Ngaire's employer, who is annoyed that the accident happened. She says it is Ngaire's fault for not following the correct lifting processes and she doesn't think that this should be considered a work-place injury because of that. She is usually happy with Ngaire's work but noted she had been late to the depot more frequently lately since Mikaere started school. She said that they can't have Ngaire back until she is recovered, since all of Ngaire's duties require her to be fully fit for work, which includes loading the van, driving to deliveries with a partner, then unloading the delivery. They have moved one of their scheduling staff into the delivery role temporarily, which is causing additional work and stress for that team. It's been two weeks already, so If Ngaire is not able to get back to work in the next couple of weeks she will need to let her go and hire a replacement. They usually get temps in to support over Christmas so she may look to make one permanent if they do a good job.

## **Part 2 – Identifying the kiritaki intended outcomes**

The ICP Navigator will discuss and agree with Ngaire and the rest of the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) what goals the programme will be working towards with her. They will start by advising that their primary objective is to support a return to work and independence. They will advise that their rehabilitation team will also set functional measures to indicate recovery. They will then discuss Ngaire's personal goals she would like to achieve during her recovery. If Ngaire does identify that she wants to resume training for the Hawkes Bay Half Marathon, the navigator will need to discuss with her what is realistic and achievable within the timeframes of the programme and set expectations with her around this. This will be in consultation with the rest of the IDT. Following this, Ngaire may be encouraged to set a lower risk goal, such as working toward running a shorter distance at the event.

### **Outcome:**

Goal 1 – Return to Work

Goal 2 – Return to Independence

Goal 3 – Ngaire is self-monitoring a training plan for a suitable distance event at the Hawkes Bay Marathon

## **Part 3 – Setting a target date for the outcomes to be achieved**

Once the IDT has worked with Ngaire to establish her goals, they will discuss and agree realistic target dates to achieve these. This may include negotiating and setting further expectations with Ngaire to set an achievable and safe goal for the programme, reassuring her that if recovery progress is good, she may be able to exceed this during the programme.

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Date achieved</b>
Return to work	1 February
Return to independence	31 December
Self -monitoring a training plan for a suitable distance event at the Hawkes Bay Marathon	By 31 March

## **Part 4 –Identifying and Implementing the supports the kiritaki will need to achieve or exceed their outcomes**

The ICP Navigator, in consultation with the rest of the IDT, will:

### **Treatment**

- Encourage Ngaire to participate in the prescribed rehabilitation programme – provide education around this.

### **Vocational plan**

- Encourage Maree (the employer) to contact the ACC ICP Team if she wants to discuss her concern about the work injury further.
- Obtain a detailed job description in the event that Ngaire does lose her role
- Arrange for a Vocational Rehabilitation Provider to make a return to work plan. This could include working with Maree to have Ngaire completing part time work in the scheduling team to cover the person who has taken over her delivery duties. Payment for her time will help with Ngaire's finances as Ngaire could earn up to 100% of her pre-injury income by recovering at work. They could also explain to the employer the benefits of Recovery at Work, including how this will not disadvantage them, and could help by ensuring extra hands for the busy Christmas period
- Recommend Ngaire to participate in her rehabilitation in the short term, which they can schedule around the proposed work times agreed with Maree.
- When Ngaire is safely able to resume some duties, Maree can be encouraged to allow her to drive alongside the delivery van and support with the loading and unloading. Wherever possible, it should be promoted that, since Ngaire is working, she should be paid for alternative duties. If necessary though, this could be as a short, unpaid work trial which would have the benefits of allowing Maree to see Ngaire's capacity and allowing Ngaire to complete work specific functional tasks to regain strength. Maree can then be confident to have Ngaire resume paid employment following this. See [Trialling a return to work](#) for more detail.

### **Other needs**

- Once a return-to-work plan has been agreed, Ngaire can request support for transport to work via MyACC. She can ask for Mikaere's school to be included as a drop-off location so she can continue this routine for him until she can drive again.
- Jordan can pick up more of the domestic tasks temporarily. If his work gets busy and recovery is taking longer, they can be encouraged to contact their ICP Navigator to discuss whether extra domestic support may be put in place temporarily.
- Ngaire can be encouraged to stay in contact with her running group socially and begin to join for some of their training when she is able.
- When she's ready to be discharged, her physiotherapist will provide her a training plan which will safely enable her to build up to the event. She will be encouraged to be realistic about what she can do, including recommending an appropriate distance to work towards based on her progress.

## Case Study Two

*This case study is to demonstrate how information gathered from the kiritaki at entry and triage into the service may be used to help inform a Recovery Plan, following the structure of the 'Rehabilitation Pathway Planning' guidance document. Work through part 1, considering what goals the kiritaki may identify, as well as taking note of any issues or barriers and how you might address these, before checking this against the remainder of the case study.*

### Part 1 – Understanding the kiritaki and their circumstances

Daniel is 19, studying dentistry at Otago University. He plays basketball on the university's team and his knee gave way as he landed awkwardly from a jump in March. He went to the after-hours doctors who diagnosed him with a suspected ACL tear, provided medication and a brace and referred him to a physiotherapist and a specialist for an MRI. It took a couple of attempts to make contact with Daniel for his appointment and he apologised as he doesn't have credit to check his voicemails. At the appointment, his physiotherapist identified him as an ICPMSK candidate and worked with the specialist to triage him into the programme, confirming the diagnosis. Rehabilitation and surgical options have been discussed, and Daniel is considering agreeing to surgery, but is concerned about the amount of time he may miss from his studies and wants to be able to rejoin the basketball team before their matches in July.

He has a part time job as a bartender at a local brewery at the weekend, which helps toward the cost of his accommodation and bills. He lives in a shared house with three friends who are studying different courses and also have part time jobs throughout the week. Daniel has been asking them to get him takeout since he can't manage cooking or cleaning up. His family live overseas and Daniel admitted he is finding it difficult being away from them since his accident.

The ICP Navigator contacts Daniel's employer, Grace, who said Daniel has been in contact a few times since his accident to apologise that he couldn't make it to work. She said he is reliable and hardworking so they are eager to keep him on board and support reduced hours for as long as needed. They roster week by week so staffing isn't too much of an issue, although the weekend and evening shifts he covered are their busiest times. He worked behind the bar serving drinks, but was also required to clear tables and serve on occasion, and also helped out with dishwashing if the kitchen was short-staffed.

### Part 2 – Identifying the kiritaki intended outcomes

The ICP Navigator will discuss and agree with Daniel and the rest of the IDT what goals the programme will be working towards with him. They will start by advising their primary objective is to support a return to work and independence, noting that some of these goals will be able to be achieved before others. They will advise that their rehabilitation team will also set functional measures to indicate recovery. They will then ask if Daniel has any other goals he would like to consider. Given Daniel has indicated an unrealistic timeframe to return to sport, it is important for the IDT to negotiate this goal with him and consider what is realistic and achievable within the timeframes of the programme. They can then set expectations with Daniel and agree a goal based on this.

Goal 1 – Return to work

Goal 2 – Return to Independence

Goal 3 – Continue to engage in study

Goal 4 – Full return to basketball

### **Part 3 – Setting a target date for the outcomes to be achieved.**

Once the IDT has worked with Daniel to establish his goals, they will discuss and agree realistic target dates to achieve these. This includes negotiating with Daniel to set an achievable and safe goal for the programme, given it includes a return to competitive sports.

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Date achieved</b>
Return to independence	15 July
Continue to engage in study	15 July
Return to work	30 September
Full return to Basketball	31 January

### **Part 4 – Identifying and Implementing the supports the kiritaki will need to achieve or exceed their outcomes**

The ICP Navigator, in consultation with the rest of the IDT, will:

#### **Treatment**

- Make a plan around suitable times to call Daniel or arrange that he can call back on a free contact number if he misses a call.
- Provide full education on benefits and risks of surgery to enable an informed decision.
- Set expectations around recovery timeframes and the importance of following a gradual return to activity following surgery, in particular sports.
- Plan surgery timing in consultation with Daniel and his university to minimise impact on studies and exams.
- Keep in contact with the university to schedule rehabilitation appointments around important study wherever possible.

#### **Vocational plan**

- Arrange vocational rehabilitation input
- Encourage Daniel to keep Grace informed of timeframes for surgery.
- Ask Grace to consider dishwashing shifts for Daniel after a month to recover post-surgery. Advise you will be in touch if he is looking like more time will be needed before he is ready. Provide a perching stool to allow him to not be weight bearing.
- Organise for Daniel to start picking up some part time work from July, working with Grace to keep to tasks that minimise the need to mobilise and allow plenty of rest breaks.

#### **Other needs**

- Encourage and support Daniel to engage with student support, including counselling. Identify what other supports he needs that they may already offer, such as meals in halls or support to get between classes/carry his bag while he is on crutches.
- Arrange equipment including a perching stool for his kitchen so he can continue some cooking and cleaning tasks.
- Support Daniel to request homecare supports via MyACC to help with his share of domestic tasks and cleaning his own room.
- Support Daniel to request taxi support via MyACC to get to university.

## Case Study Three

*This case study is to propose how case management queries may be resolved by the ICP Navigator and IDT, taking into account the resources and support available to the ICP Providers.*

Lui had been working part time as a barista whilst studying business at university. He graduated in November and was successful in applying for a role as a Junior Systems Auditor for a sales company, starting in the New Year. He decided to go away with friends for a short holiday to South America over Christmas and resigned from his barista role before he left. He and his friends went rock climbing, where Lui unfortunately injured his shoulder when his foot slipped and his bodyweight dropped and twisted while his right hand was still in the handhold, causing immediate shoulder pain, and he fell. On his return to New Zealand the following week, he found that he was still in a great deal of pain around his shoulder, particularly when lifting his arm above his head so he went to a physiotherapist. His physiotherapist suspected a rotator cuff tear and referred him into their ICPMSK programme. The diagnosis was confirmed by the team at the triage assessment and Lui was accepted onto the pathway.

Mele was assigned as Lui's ICP Navigator and was working through creating Lui's recovery plan with him. Lui was concerned about whether he would be able to start work as planned in two weeks' time, and whether he would have enough money for his rent if this was delayed since he had spent a lot on his holiday. Mele wasn't sure if Lui would be eligible for Weekly Compensation, since Lui had resigned from his job before his accident.

### **What should Mele do to support Lui to know if he is eligible?**

Start by referring to available resources for ICPMSK Suppliers.

Next steps: Mele referred to the 'Weekly Compensation Information Sheet,' which was provided as part of the Provider Education material and noted that it states that 'If a kiritaki wasn't employed right before their injury, they may still be eligible for Weekly Compensation'. She wonders if this might apply to Lui and checked the guidance referred to on the ACC website. Here it says that you may be eligible if you:

- had a new job lined up before your injury, and you:
  - would have started this new job within three months of your accident and
  - had been working within the 28 days before your injury

She is confident that this applies to Lui and supports him to apply via MyACC. He is accepted and is hugely relieved because the surgeon has mentioned he will need some time off work, which he would have struggled to afford.

Mele is now unsure whether she should be making a plan to support Lui to return to his new job, or whether she needs to look at capacity for his pre-injury role as a barista. She found the note in the 'Helping kiritaki return to work' document that ACC may advise if alternative routes need to be explored for kiritaki who were between employment when they were injured. She advises Lui of this, but he is anxious to know what his support will look like, given he is going into his first role in his career.

Mele can't find any other reference to this in the 'how to' guides.

### **What should Mele do to confirm the next steps for Recovery Planning for Lui?**

Check her supplier's internal training resources and refer to more experienced colleagues.

Next steps: Mele checks with a more experienced navigator. Her colleague remembered the eligibility criteria, and that there were different rules for what constituted 'incapacity for work' for Lui but wasn't sure what ACC would say for Lui's specific situation. He suggested Mele should contact the ACC ICP

Team for confirmation. Mele let Lui know she would find out as soon as possible and get back to him, but they set a tentative plan around returning to his new role in the meantime.

**Is it appropriate for Mele to contact the ICP Team in this situation? If so, how should she make contact?**

Yes. Mele has checked available resources and is aware that they can pursue a normal return to work, and ACC will advise if this needs to change. Her kiritaki, however, is wanting more certainty about what this may look like. Given the need isn't urgent, it's appropriate to contact the ICP Team via email rather than phone.

Next steps: Mele sent an email to the ACC ICP Team detailing Lui's situation. An ICP team member emailed back thanking Mele for her query, and acknowledging the more niche situation Lui was in. He advised that Mele was right to work toward supporting Lui to the new role in this situation, since the lighter work type and higher salary mean he would soon be earning more than his Weekly Compensation anyway. He reiterated that these situations are considered case-by-case, and that the ACC ICP Team will always let the navigator know if alternative routes need to be pursued for these kiritaki. Mele let Lui know of this plan, and he was happy to be able to share this with his new employer.