

Feature

On-site Physio a Blinding Flash of the Obvious

Musculo-Skeletal Disorders down by 79%.

On-site physiotherapy is rapidly becoming recognised as the most effective solution for managing workplace sprains and strains.

VTA members Australian air Express and Westgate Logistics are just two companies fast discovering the benefits of implementing such on-site physiotherapy programs.

Statistics show that sprain and strain related injuries reduce up to 79% in the first year, slicing workers compensation premiums, increasing worker morale and changing workplace cultures.

Wayne Skinner, Workplace Safety Adviser at the VTA, confirmed the impact of musculo-skeletal disorders (MSD's) in the Short Distance Road Freight (SDRF) area.

"MSD's currently accounts for 53% of injuries according to WorkSafe statistics", he said.

58% of injuries in the Transport and Storage area are Musculo-Skeletal Disorders

Supporting the impact of MSD injuries to the transport and storage industry is the latest published Victorian WorkCover Authority Statistical Summary 2004-05. It shows that back claims in the transport and storage industry have recorded an average

claims cost of \$26,758 per claim with other musculo-skeletal injuries averaging \$14,988 per claim.

Savings and Benefits

Based on these statistics and claims costs, on-site physiotherapy has saved Westgate Logistics in excess of \$460,000 per year by reducing their musculo-skeletal claims by 23 at its main warehouse. With the on-site physiotherapy costing around \$60,000 per year, Graham Murdoch, National HR Manager for Westgate Logistics confirms that this demonstrates, "A very healthy cost-benefit of \$7.66 saved per dollar invested."

According to Graham Murdoch, "At Westgate's largest site in Altona, the on-site physiotherapy program has seen our sprains and strains claims reduced by 79% in the first year."

"The workers are healthier, the Board is happy, and Westgate's Victorian operation has led the way across the country. Being able to quantify the savings and pinpoint high risk duties via BodyCare's software program and statistical analysis has seen us change to a highly proactive safety environment."

Linda Del Medico, Victorian State Human Resource Manager of Australian air Express (AaE) underscored this.

"AaE at Tullamarine engaged BodyCare Physiotherapy two years ago and within six-months of commencement we realised outstanding reductions in our musculo-skeletal claims. Our Sprains and Strains claims are down by 60%, employee morale is up, and BodyCare are now providing services in Brisbane and Perth for our group. We couldn't be happier," she said.

Three Pronged Attack

Three critical factors are addressed with on-site physiotherapy:

Firstly, the program offers early intervention to the injured worker, which is widely recognised as the most powerful tool to a successful return to work.

Secondly, the workforce is encouraged to seek treatment for any pain or niggle, even if it happened outside of work time. These slight pains or niggles are stopped before they are exacerbated by the workers duties and become workplace injuries.

Thirdly, the on-site physio bridges the gap between the employee and the employer. This means the company has instant control over the injury, resulting in the most expedient return to work possible, which benefits the employee and the company.

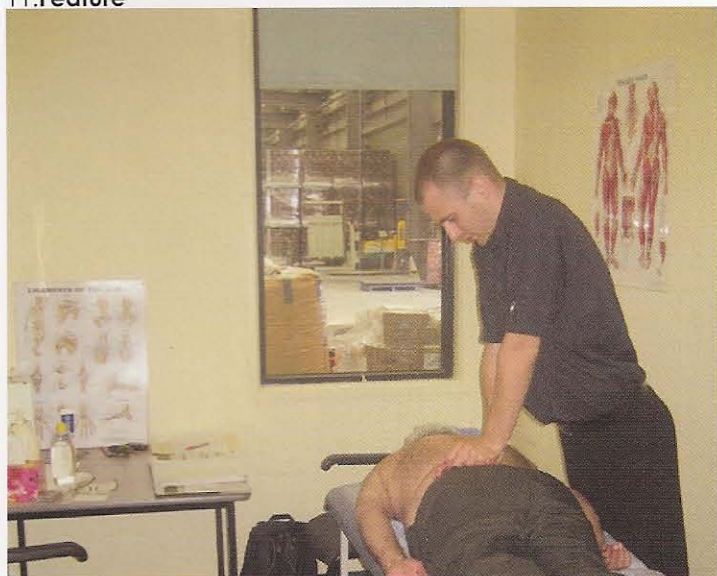
The Final Word

"Businesses have become great at managing injuries, but the aim is to stop them occurring in the first place," says Dean Mohr Managing Director of BodyCare.

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"We encourage our clients to have employees see our physiotherapists regardless of where the injury occurred. The worker could come to work on Monday with a little pain in their shoulder from surfing the day before or a minor pain from work the week before. Either way, that situation is treated and managed early, and a potential workplace injury is avoided," he says.

Mohr continues, "Our physiotherapists keep statistics on every patient that comes for treatment. With the Patient Type graph (above right), the physio makes a judgement on the injury. Column 1 is where the injury would have definitely become a claim. Column 2 shows the injuries that were prevented from going to a physiotherapy clinic offsite. The third column quantifies proactive patients who attend the physiotherapist, and may or may not have become a claim in the future.



On Site Physio Visits



Checking for Medical Conditions

“Medical Conditions Must be Reported” - VicRoads

The proactive column is generally the largest, which is what the business is looking for. The objective of this program is to turn a reactive workforce into a proactive one.

The number of prevented claims is confirmed by internal company data usually to within one or two claims either way.

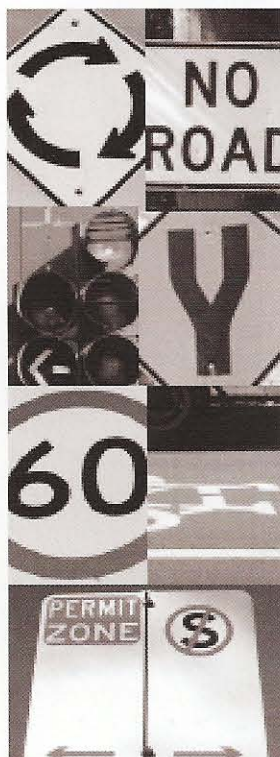
Mohr adds, “BodyCare is now the largest provider of on-site physiotherapy services in Australia. Providing our physiotherapists with training in our injury protocols and systems, and supporting the clients with monthly treatment notes and quarterly statistics has taken onsite physiotherapy to the next level.”

A variety of graphs and statistics, such as what type of injuries are happening in which areas are provided to the clients. This helps identify high risk tasks and to take measures to remedy the problem.

To discuss how BodyCare’s onsite physiotherapy services can be integrated into your workplace, call BodyCare’s Sales and Marketing Manager Mark Volard on 0422 413 888.

Regardless of age, if you apply for, or hold a driver licence or a learner permit you are required to notify VicRoads if you have a long-term or permanent injury or illness that may affect safe driving. The table opposite lists the conditions that must be reported to VicRoads. If you are unsure whether your condition should be reported, consult your doctor.

For more information, contact the VTA on 03) 9646 8590.



Condition	
Alcohol Dependency	
Cancer	
Cardiovascular	Acute Myocardial Infarct (AMI)
Ischaemic Heart Disease	Angina
	Angioplasty
	Anti-Coagulant Therapy
	Atrial Fibrillation
	Cardiac pace maker
	Cardiac Defibrillator
	Cardiac Arrest
	Cardiomyopathy
	Congenital disorders
	Coronary Bypass Graft (CABG)
	Deep Vein Thrombosis DVT
	Heart Failure
	Heart Transplant
	Hypertension
	Pulmonary Embolism
	Valvular Heart Disease
Diabetes	Diabetes controlled by diet and exercise alone
	Diabetes: controlled on oral medication (NIDDM) Type 2
Epilepsy	
Gastrointestinal Disorders	Hepatic Failure
	Liver Transplant
Hearing	
Musculoskeletal disorders	Arthritis
Neurological Disorders	Cerebral Palsy
	Dementia and other cognitive impairments
	Head Injury
	Neglects
	Neuromuscular conditions
	Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson’s, etc...
	Strokes (CVA)
	Transient Ischaemic Attacks (TIAs)
Psychiatric disorders	
Renal Failure	
Respiratory Failure	
Sleep Disorders	Sleep Apnoea
	Narcolepsy
Syncope (Blackouts)	
Vestibular Disorders	Vertigo
Vision	Acuity
	Monocularity (loss of vision in one eye)
	Diplopia
	Cataracts
	Glaucoma
	Visual field defect