

Our Philosophy

Work is a tonic that makes you well

The Interact Group recognise and support international research and evidence that indicates that good work is the optimal environment for recovery, rehabilitation, and improvement of quality of life. We also recognise that facilitating a recovery at work and return to work can impact on a workers life outside of work, including a positive impact on family, relationships and children. For more information see our briefing paper titled "The Health Benefits of Work".

Through a belief in 'work is a tonic that makes you well', our service delivery is focussed on utilising the work environment both as a setting for recovery, not only from the disability or injury of concern, but also as a means for life improvement across the biopsychosocial spectrum.

Additionally, considering the guiding principle of earliest and highest pace of possible intervention, a return to meaningful and positive work should occur as soon as possible to enable a timely positive impact on the workers life and minimise the personal, social and economic cost of worklessness. The international research supports an "every hour, every day counts" approach.

Guiding Principles of Service Delivery

The Interact Group is committed to the health benefits of good work. We ensure that we engage with everyone involved in the return to work process to influence and advocate for employment outcomes. We will provide the best possible service for all stakeholders, in order to achieve durable and positive outcomes.

In doing so, The Interact Group's service delivery reflects the following key principles:

- Strategic, creative, cost effective, timely and innovative service provision to achieve a successful return to work outcome for the client or worker.
- The earliest possible and highest pace of intervention to ensure a safe and durable recovery at work and return to meaningful employment.
- Evidence based planning and decision making.
- Engagement with all stakeholders.
- A respectful, honest, open and supportive service delivery environment.
- A commitment to continuous improvement based on consultation with stakeholders and stakeholder groups.
- A service delivery that is equitable and accessible.

We utilise a biopsychosocial model. The OECD in 2007 acknowledged that diagnosis is not a predictor of return to work. Our approach ensures that we focus on the social, personal, psychological and medical needs of our clients. The Interact Group recognise the various factors which may impede, promote, enable to constrain recovery, rehabilitation and successful and durable return to work, and consequently utilise an array of outcome measures and return to work strategies to enable a tailored return to work plan to be developed and achieved.

Engagement

The Interact Group's service delivery is founded on the notion of client engagement. We wish to ensure that our clients are not only positive participants in the recovery at work and return to work process, but can understand and recognise the health benefits of good work. We seek to build rapport at the outset to ensure that we can intervene as early as possible to enable biological, psychological and social barriers to rehabilitation and recovery at work to be addressed through planned and agreed case management strategies.

The Interact Group engages with all stakeholders of the client in a consultative manner. It is our role to professionally lead the delivery of services. We seek agreement to all plans and goals from all relevant parties, and ensure that we facilitate a high level of communication to attain continuous engagement by all parties in the process of achieving recovery at work and return to employment. Through engagement we are able to be most effective as change agents as we influence and support a recovery at work. Where appropriate and approved by appropriate parties, Interact staff will engage outside the usual stakeholder base to facilitate referrals to community programs, specialists, and other parties which may benefit the client.

All staff of The Interact Group are actively engaged as facilitators of our philosophy, "work is a tonic that makes you well" and seek to achieve the ultimate goal of return to work for each client.

Assessment

The Interact Group provides a continuous process of assessment to enable adaptation to change and progress, and to continually modify our strategies. Assessments are undertaken based on the consideration of clients and stakeholder needs and result in the development of both short and long term goals that are mutually agreed upon. It is The Interact Group's intention to utilise assessment as a method to provide a timely service delivery that is paced appropriately in order to achieve goals in a cost effective manner and to reduce the potential negative impact of worklessness.

In order to effectively assure a continuous model of assessment The Interact Group's human resource model is that of multidisciplinary teams who are either mobile across our region or can effectively work via our digital service delivery infrastructure in order to provide professional support across our group. Furthermore, The Interact Group are committed to staff training to improve assessment skill and assessment outcome, and deploy internal audits and clinical oversight to ensure continuous improvement.

Intervention

The Interact Group act in order to promote positive change. Each point of intervention is tailored to our client needs which are identified via objective assessment. Interventions are linked to short and long term goals and form an agreed and communicated client strategy or plan. That is, The Interact Group utilise communication, engagement and assessment to formulate our intervention plans to achieve our agreed goals. Decisions regarding goals and subsequent intervention are based on the biopsychosocial framework of the client, stakeholder needs, and an understanding of the most direct route to enable recovery at work and return the worker to meaningful and durable employment.

We intervene to:

- Understand needs.
- Restore function and promote recovery.
- Improve capacity.
- Achieve goals and plans.
- Empower our clients.
- Communicate.
- Enable recovery at work.
- Build independence.
- Ensure durability of health outcomes.
- Engage and facilitate strong relationships.
- Collaborate.
- Educate.
- Mitigate risks and barriers.

Our Staff

Our staff are matched to our organisation, our services and our customers. We employ professionals in their field. Our staff understand our clients and are effective communicators, clinicians and facilitators. Our staff are driven to make a positive change in our client's lives that is sustainable and rewarding. Our staff are trained in our service delivery model and the clinical concepts which assist to implement it.

Engagement

When a worker who has sustained a workplace injury is referred to Interact, our first response is to engage. We first engage with the referring party to understand their reasons for the referral, and their objectives in utilising our services. We provide advice to the referring party in order to match our services to their expressed needs.

Within 24 hours of referral we engage with the worker. Our objective is to learn about their needs so that our services can be accommodating. We aim to build rapport, earn trust, and ensure our workers that our services are aimed at improving their lives.

We also engage quickly with the worker's employer. It is important to ensure that the employer is involved in the process of returning their worker to health through recovery at work. We engage with the employer to understand what we can do to make their workers transition back to work simple, easy and successful.

We make plans to engage with treating health professionals, including treating doctors to inform our assessment and intervention.

Assessment

The type of assessment we perform is determined based on a match to the needs of the worker and employer, considering the type and duration of injury, the worker's personal and individual needs, and the employer's considerations. Assessments are scheduled in collaboration with the worker, and are conducted either at the worksites, our offices, or an alternative suitable location. Where a worker remains employed it is our preference to always conduct assessments at the worksite wherever possible.

A typical assessment may last from 1 hour to 2.5 hours, depending on the type of assessment. Our assessments involve:

- Gathering of information to plan a timely recovery at work.
- Understanding the workers strengths for returning to work and their physical and psychological needs.
- Understanding the impact of the workers injury or illness on their personal, social and vocational functioning.
- Workplace issues which may impact on the workers' return to work.
- The employers' ability to offer appropriate duties and the capacity of the worksite to accommodate the worker to recover at work.
- The injured workers transferable skills and vocational needs.
- Stakeholder advice regarding capacity, treatment, suitability of employment and direction of rehabilitation.
- The establishment of mutually agreed goals for recovery at work and return to work.

Our assessment allows us to formulate recommendations that are aimed at assisting the injured worker return to health via work through a recovery at work program.

Intervention

From assessment, Interact determine appropriate strategies and interventions. We discuss our recommendations with the referrer, and we gain agreement to our goals and strategies from all parties. We plan to achieve success through continual assessment. All services provided are goal focussed, including:

- Return to work plans that establish long term goals, document the strengths that will contribute to this goal, and outline the cost and duration of our services.
- Recovery at work plans – to return an injured worker to work through graded phases of suitable duties, work trial placements or volunteer placements.
- Employment placement plans – provides for a worker, who is unemployed, to work through skill development, retraining, functional improvement and job seeking strategies.
- Weekly Activity Plans – plans to establish short term goals and agreed activities that improve a job seeker's chances of returning to employment.
- Functional restoration programs – plans that aim to increase physical functioning, improve coping skills and promote productive lifestyles.

Plans are implemented through consultation with stakeholders, regular review points, and ensure achievement of goals through gathering of evidence of health outcomes.