

WorkSafe ACT

Rehabilitation Providers

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Introduction

A key feature of the Workers Compensation Act 1951 (the Act) is the focus on Injury Management. There are increased obligations for stakeholders specifically designed to assist the rehabilitation process of returning injured workers to suitable employment.

An approved Workplace Rehabilitation Provider

- provides vocational rehabilitation in accordance with section 21 of the Workers Compensation Regulation 2002
- must be qualified to provide a rehabilitation service in accordance with section 22 of the Workers Compensation Regulation 2002
- must maintain written and electronic records in accordance with sections 23 & 24 of the Workers Compensation Regulation 2002.

Only approved workplace rehabilitation providers are eligible to provide vocational rehabilitation for the purposes of *the Act*.

An approved workplace rehabilitation provides, for an injured worker, an independent party to liaise and negotiate with everyone involved in the worker's rehabilitation.

The primary focus of the injury management process is the involvement of all 3 key parties (the employer, injured worker and nominated treating doctor) in the management of the injury from the time of the accident to the return to work or settlement of a claim.

An approved workplace rehabilitation provider provides, for an injured worker, an independent party to liaise and negotiate with everyone involved in the worker's rehabilitation.

Only approved rehabilitation providers are eligible to provide vocational rehabilitation for the purposes of the Act.

Vocational Rehabilitation

There are three processes involved in Injury Management. These are the:

- Injury Management Program

- Return to Work Program
- Personal Injury Plan.

Vocational rehabilitation is organised as part of the Personal Injury Plan and involves the assessment of the injured worker with the aim of providing, training and other services to enable a return to suitable employment. It is the insurers obligation to ensure that this vocational rehabilitation will lead to a real prospect of employment or a real increase in earnings for the injured worker.

Rehabilitation Provider Approval Update

From 1 July 2010 amendments to the *Workers Compensation Act 1951* regarding the [Nationally Consistent Approval Framework for Workplace Rehabilitation Providers](#) (the Framework) commenced. This means that organisations wishing to provide workplace rehabilitation and return to work services in the ACT will only be approved if they can demonstrate in their application compliance with the Conditions of Approval contained within the Framework.

The purpose of this approval framework is intended to provide:

- An agreed and understood model of workplace rehabilitation
- Increased uniformity of definitions and expectations of workplace providers
- A more robust system for cancelling rehabilitation providers' approval, that ensures credibility of the approval framework
- Increased understanding of expected standards of performance for employers, workers, providers and insurers
- Reduced administrative costs and complexity for providers who work across jurisdictions
- Reduced costs and complexity for employers and insurers who work across jurisdictions

The new Framework took effect in all Australian jurisdictions (except Queensland) from 1 July 2010.

Current ACT providers were invited to attend a briefing on the Framework hosted by the Australian Association of Rehabilitation Providers.

In particular, attendees to the briefing were advised that, if they operate in the ACT and other jurisdictions (eg. Comcare or WorkCover NSW), applications for approval need to be made to those other jurisdictions **in the first instance**.

Comcare and WorkCover NSW have agreed to act as the "home jurisdiction" for the initial implementation period for those ACT providers who also operate in their jurisdictions.

Rehabilitation providers were required to submit their applications to Comcare and/or WorkCover NSW by **31 December 2010**.

Once received, the approval can then be presented to this office for mutual recognition (use the application form below for mutual recognition). Applications for approval under the new framework are now available from Comcare and WorkCover NSW (as well as the majority of other participating jurisdictions).

Providers **who solely** provide services to the ACT Private Sector Workers' Compensation Scheme are requested to apply to WorkSafe ACT's Workers Compensation Inspectorate by 31 May 2010 for approval under the new Framework prior to its commencement on **1 July 2010**.

- [Approved Rehabilitation Provider Application Form](#)

For general information regarding the Framework or the process of approval for workplace rehabilitation providers in the ACT, a copy of the guide can be downloaded (below) or alternatively for further information you may wish to visit the [HWCA](#) website.

- [Nationally Consistent Approval Framework for Workplace Rehabilitation Providers](#)

Annual Self-Evaluations

As part of the Framework workplace rehabilitation providers are required to assess their conformance with the conditions of approval through annual self-evaluations and participate in the evaluations conducted by WorkSafe ACT's Workers Compensation Inspectorate.

WorkSafe ACT will develop a set of evaluation tools that can be used by evaluators in assessing conformance.

List of Approved Rehabilitation Providers

[Click here for a list of the current approved rehabilitation providers.](#)