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General Practitioner  
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# Better@Work Taupo

- A GP's perspective
  - The prototype development process
  - The evidence for return to work
  - Working with a Better@Work Coordinator





Joanne Mintoft, NZROT

Better@Work Coordinator, Taupo

Employed by Lifestyle Potential under  
contract to Lake Taupo PHO

# Role of Better@Work Coordinator

- Review pre-injury duties; identify barriers to return to work.
- Contact employer.
- Worksite visit.
- Communicate with GP and ACC.
- Recommend required support.





# Better@Work Options

- Information
  - Definitions of terms e.g. “light” duties.
  - Investigate alternative duties or alternative hours options.
- Clinical support
  - Pacing and rebuilding tissue tolerance post injury.
  - Work station/ environmental/equipment assessment.
- Practical support
  - childcare, home help, taxis to and from work or equipment such as perching stools.



# Advantages of Better@Work

- Rehab starts on day one.
- Bio-psycho-social model and the Disability prevention model.
- Creates a link between GP and employer.
- Certify for “work ability not work availability”.





# Case Study One

## **Injury:**

Torn Gastrocnemius.

## **Occupation:**

Contractor maintaining 300 km of roading edge.

## **ACC 18:**

Initial fully unfit then fit for selected duties 10 hours per day:

no lifting or forceful movements, no heavy work, no prolonged walking, no prolonged standing.

## Better@Work actions/outcomes:

- Visit to the deport to discuss work tasks and graded return.
- Recommended to ACC purchase new work boots to support his calf.
- Passed on information regarding the worksite to the GP. follow up once fit for selected duties.







## Case Study Two

### **Injury:**

Lumbar disc prolapse. Felt a 'pop' while lifting at work and then sudden pain in his back.

### **Occupation:**

Laborer at landscape gardeners.

### **ACC 18:**

10 hours/day, 5 days/week for a week.

No lifting or forceful movements, no heavy physical work, no using the loader.

## Better@Work actions/outcomes:

- GP phoned B@W Coordinator to advise of the injured workers wishes to return tomorrow and of the restrictions.
- Visit to the work site to observe and advise re: lifting technique. Client not using the hand truck and lifting unevenly.
- Injured worker stayed and recovered at work and did not visit GP again.





Dr Suzanne Gower

Establishment Project Manager for Taupo

Consultant to Better@Work Expansion Sites

# Better@Work Now

- Taupo 15 months on
- Expansion Sites
  - Hawkes Bay PHO
  - Harbour PHO on the North Shore
  - HealthWest PHO in West Auckland
  - Waiora Healthcare PHO in West Auckland



# Better@Work Now

- Tailored for local conditions
- Different models of service
  - PHO managed, coordinated and provided
  - PHO managed and coordinated with contracted providers
  - PHO managed with coordination and service provision contracted out

