



Government of  
South Australia



Return to *work.*  
Return to *life.*

A fresh approach to engaging and supporting doctors in our scheme

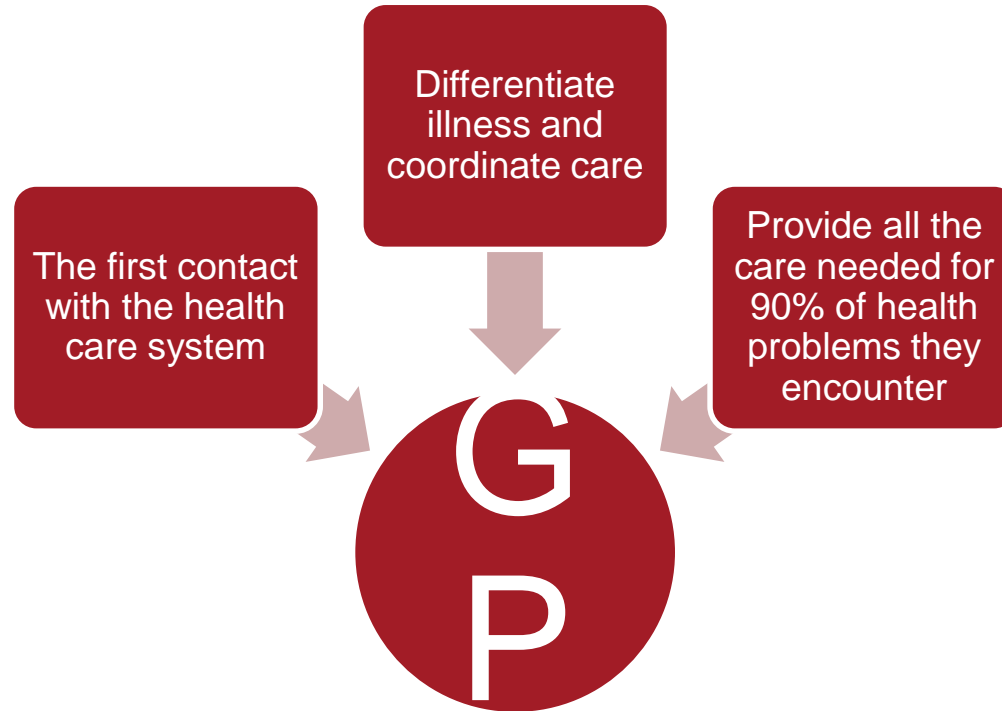
**Marcia Vernon**, Director Health and Return to Work Services. 23 October 2015

# Agenda

- Understanding the GP profile
- What GPs say
- The real problem
- A fresh approach
- What's in it for you



# The Doctor profile

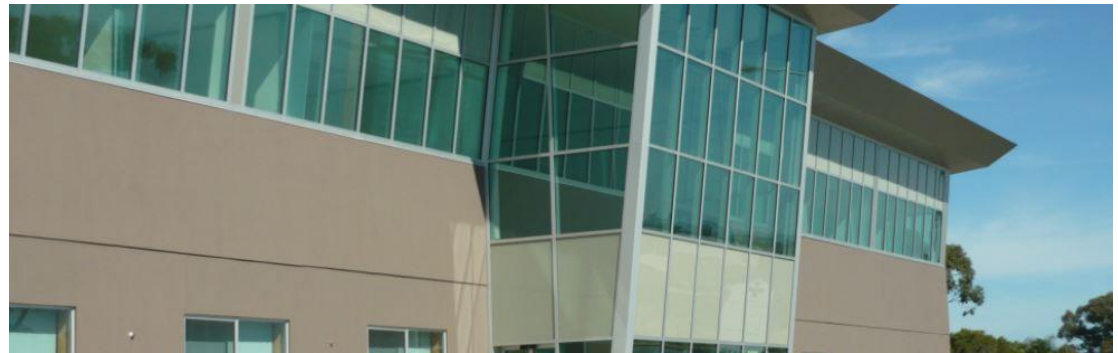


# The Doctor profile (cont)

Smaller practices with local decision making



Corporate chains with centralised decision making



# The Doctor profile (cont)



Complete 10-15 years training



Provide care for all ages, genders,  
and across all disease categories



Work both in isolation and as part of  
a team



## The Doctor profile (cont)

88% of people rate doctors  
as **ethical** and **honest**



# The Doctor profile (cont)



83% of Australians consult a GP at least once per year



116 million General Practice services were delivered in 2009-10

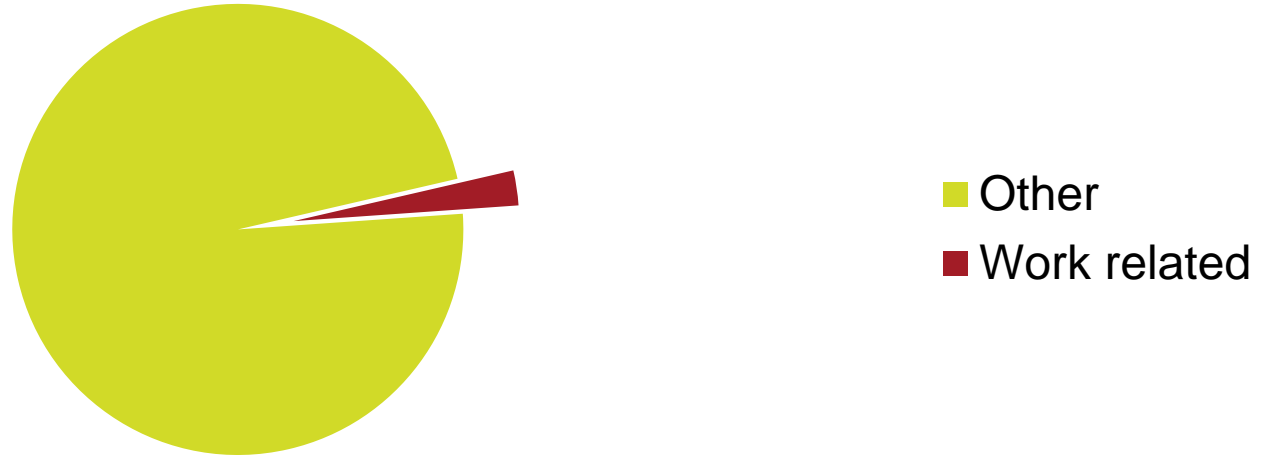


work-related problems account for only **2.5** out of **100** general practice encounters



# The Doctor profile (cont)

## GP Encounters





# What Doctors tell us

- *“I think I went to a one-hour tutorial about WorkCover when I was at Uni... that’s all we ever got...” Northern suburbs GP*
- *“I don’t let my junior doctors see WorkCover patients... it’s too complex, it’s not fair on them”  
Clinical lead GP, Northern suburbs*
- *I trained in the UK, we don’t have a system like this there” GP Registrar, Northern Suburbs*



# What Doctors tell us (cont)

- *“the patients see me as their advocate, I’ve known some of them since they were kids... I know their families... they expect me to support them no matter what” Gawler GP*
- *“There’s so much paperwork, red-tape and communication with everyone but the patient it seems, it all takes time” Northern Suburbs GP*



# What Doctors tell us (Cont)

*“you have never really been clear about what you expect from GPs, and what is our role, a model of care for work injury would be helpful”* Adelaide GP

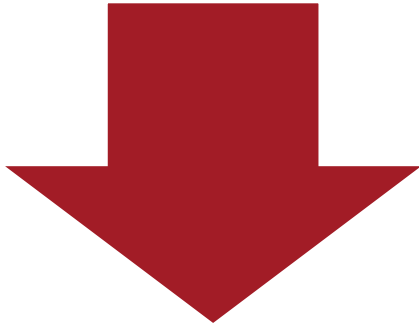


# The real problem



**High** influence,

**High** expectations placed on  
Doctors



Potentially, **low** knowledge and  
**low** confidence in managing  
patients with a work injury



We're taken a fresh approach to the problem



# What we're trying to achieve

Doctors are **engaged** with the Return to Work scheme

Doctors feel **respected** for their expertise and

Doctors are **supported** to achieve the **best possible outcomes** for patients with a work injury



# How we're achieving it

Means of influencing and educating doctors:

- Informal
- Semi formal
- Point-Of-Sale
- Through others



# ***Dr Gavin Shepherd***

***Occupational and Environmental Physician,  
Medical Advisor ReturnToWorkSA***



# Medical Advisor



**Dr Gavin Shepherd**  
Occupational and  
Environmental Physician

- Current outcomes in SA
  - Iatrogenic disability
- Certification of incapacity and the implications
- Certification vs prescription
- Practical advice on how to apply the health benefits of work into clinical practice:
  - Unfit and fit on a single certificate
  - The new certificate as a tool to reinforce capacity



# New Work Capacity Certificate

## Work Capacity Certificate

### C. Certification

In my opinion, you: (please tick whichever apply)

have recovered from your injury/condition and are fit to return to your normal duties and hours on: \_\_\_\_\_

some further treatment may be required

are fit to perform suitable duties that accommodate your functional abilities from: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

are medically unfit to undertake suitable duties while recovering from your injury for the period: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Certification based on functional capacity, not visible disabilities.  
Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

I estimate you should have functional capacity to return to work in  days  weeks OR  uncertain at this stage  
(estimated timeframe will assist with planning for return to safe work)

I would like to review your progression:  \_\_\_\_\_ or  at your next medical consultation

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

I estimate you should have functional capacity to return to work in  days  weeks OR  uncertain at this stage  
(estimated timeframe will assist with planning for return to safe work)

I would like to review your progression:  \_\_\_\_\_ or  at your next medical consultation

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

### D. Treatment plan

The following treatment plan is aimed at assisting your recovery and return to work

\_\_\_\_\_

I have referred you for the following clinical treatment:

- Medical specialist (Name & speciality) \_\_\_\_\_
- Psychologist (Name) \_\_\_\_\_
- Physiotherapist (Name) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (Name & discipline) \_\_\_\_\_



### E. Functional ability

#### E. Functional ability

Your ability to work is affected by this injury(ies)/condition(s) as follows:

(Please select applicable functions - Blank fields indicate that limitations don't apply. Please include any impact of medication on function)

No restrictions

Physical function	On	With modifications	Cannot
Strong:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Standing/walking:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kneeling/squatting:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Carrying/holding/lifting:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reaching above shoulder:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bending:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of affected body part:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Neck movement:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Climbing steps/stairs/ladders:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Driving:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments  
(eg. details of capacity or limitations that will assist in identification of suitable duties)

Mental health function	Not affected	Partially affected	Affected
Attention/concentration:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Memory (short term and/or long term):	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Judgement (ability to make decisions):	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other functional considerations - not listed above  
(please provide details in comments section)

I have prescribed medication(s) that could impact upon your ability to undertake some activities.

Details: \_\_\_\_\_

I recommend:

- A graduated increase in working hours over  weeks from  hours a day to your normal hours/  hours a day
- Non-consecutive working days for a period of  days or  weeks

### G. Doctor's details

Doctor's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Provider Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Completion date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Face to face medical education

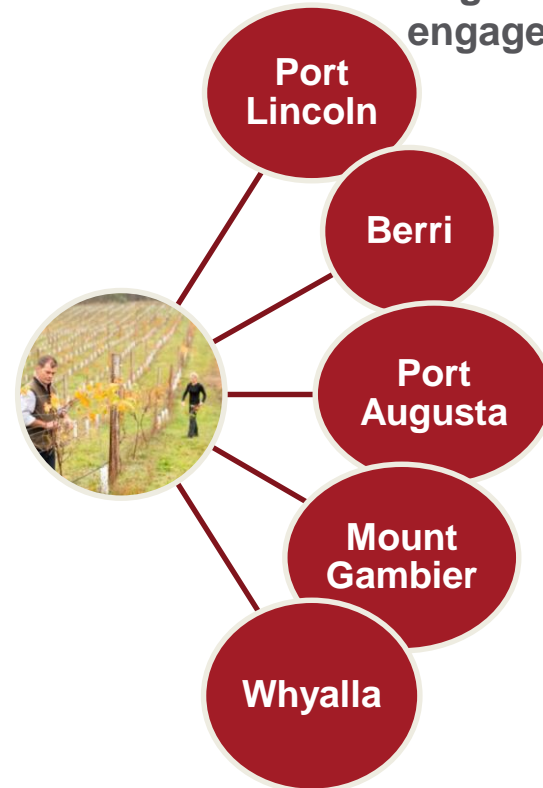
Assessing musculoskeletal injuries within a standard consultation  
(3 part series)

Managing patients with psychological and stress injuries

Certification in South Australia

Practice Manager workshop

Regional engagement



# Online education

Two **free** CPD point accredited online learning modules for doctors:

- The role of the GP in recovery and RTW
- The Health benefits of Work

Login at the following address:

[http://www.sapmea.asn.au/sapmea\\_calendar.html](http://www.sapmea.asn.au/sapmea_calendar.html)



The screenshot shows a digital interface for an online learning module. At the top, it says "The Health Benefits of Work" and "Health effects of worklessness". The "Return to WorkSA" logo is in the top right corner. On the left, there is a photograph of a woman in athletic wear sitting on a green mat, smiling. On the right, there is a text prompt: "Select the different questions to find out more about worklessness and its negative effects on health and wellbeing." Below this prompt are three blue buttons with white text: "What is worklessness?", "What are the consequences of worklessness?", and "Family impact". At the bottom of the interface, there are navigation controls: a speaker icon, a left arrow labeled "PREV", and a right arrow labeled "NEXT".

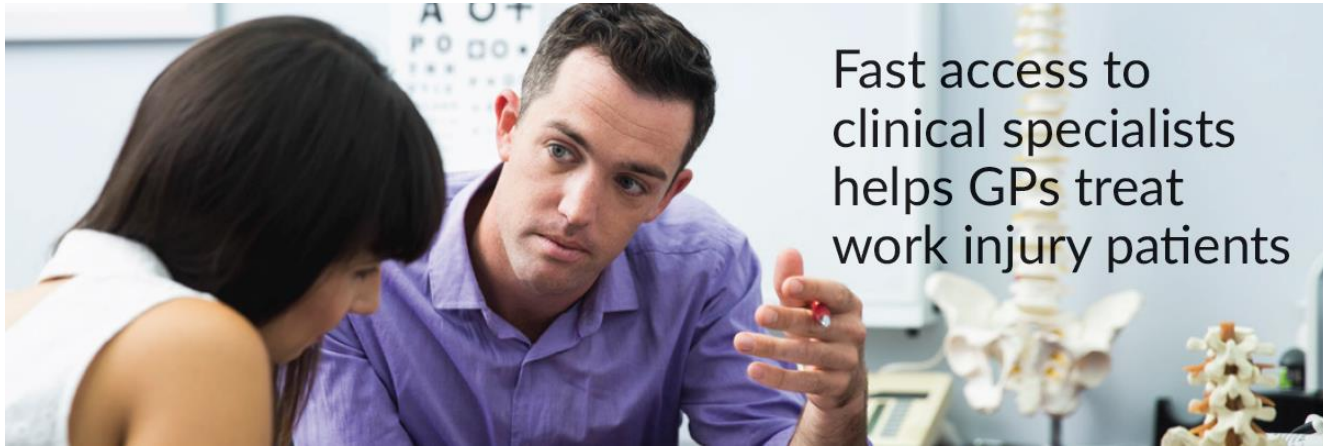


Your Practice Support Consultant –  
**Nathanael Brown**

Email - [nathanael.brown@rtwsa.com](mailto:nathanael.brown@rtwsa.com)



# Second opinion medicine



For more information:  
[www.rtwsa.com](http://www.rtwsa.com)



The screenshot shows a webpage with a navigation menu on the left containing 'Service providers', 'Supporting recovery', 'Medical practitioners', 'Work Capacity Certificate', 'Online education for GPs', 'Practice visits', 'Second opinion medicine services', and 'Nurse practitioners'. The main content area is titled 'Second opinion medicine services' and includes a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > Service providers > Supporting recovery > Medical practitioners > Second opinion medicine services'. Below the title is the question 'What are second opinion medicine services?' followed by a paragraph: 'Second opinion medicine services are a clinical support tool that provides treating GPs and their patients with quick access to a second opinion from leading South Australian medical specialists on:'. A list of services follows: '> diagnosis', '> prognosis', '> treatment planning', and '> approaches for supporting recovery and improving a patient's functional abilities.'. On the right side, there is a 'Related links' section with three items: '> Corporate Health Group', '> General Practitioner's Specialist Service', and '> Hindmarsh Medical Centre'. A 'PRINT' icon is also visible.



**The GP Helpline is ReturnToWorkSA's telephone and email support service**



Enquiries can also be emailed to [GPHelpline@rtwsa.com](mailto:GPHelpline@rtwsa.com)



# *What's in it for you?*

***Marcia Vernon, Director Health and Return to Work  
Services***



# What's in it for you?

- We're working hard to engage doctors and change the negative perception of working in the South Australian Return to Work scheme
- We're all accessing the same doctors
- A less frustrating and a more professionally fulfilling experience

# What *could* be in it for the doctors?

- All parties in the work injury system have a positive, consistent and non-legalistic approach
- Better health outcomes for their patients
- A less frustrating and a more professionally fulfilling experience



# Call to action



Put yourself into the shoes of a doctor. Think about one thing that you currently do that has the potential to negatively impact your relationship with them, or the outcomes they may be able to achieve for their patients (your employees)..... and try a different approach.



***Questions***

