



Self Insurers of South Australia, 9 Dec 2016

THE IMPACT OF COMPENSATION ON RECOVERY

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WORK HEALTH GROUP



WHAT WILL BE COVERED TODAY?

SETTING
THE SCENE

SUMMARY OF
RESEARCH

SUMMARY OF
IPAR ANALYSIS

WHAT CAN
BE DONE?

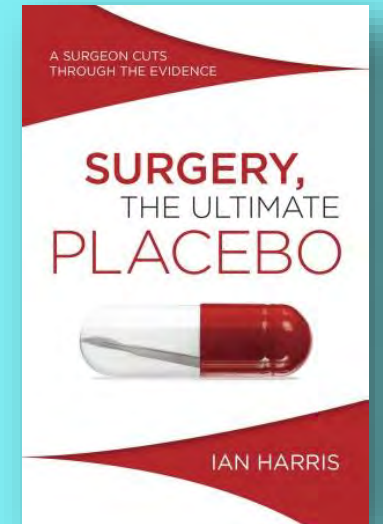
PROFESSOR IAN HARRIS



“

Compensation is meant to be something **good** to compensate for something **bad...**

”



WHAT IS GOING ON?



JOHN

- 28 year old Boilermaker
- Shoulder strain 3 months ago
- Injured at home, building a deck
- 2 days off work, sick leave
- 6 sessions of Physio
- Back at work full hours / duties within 2 weeks



PETER

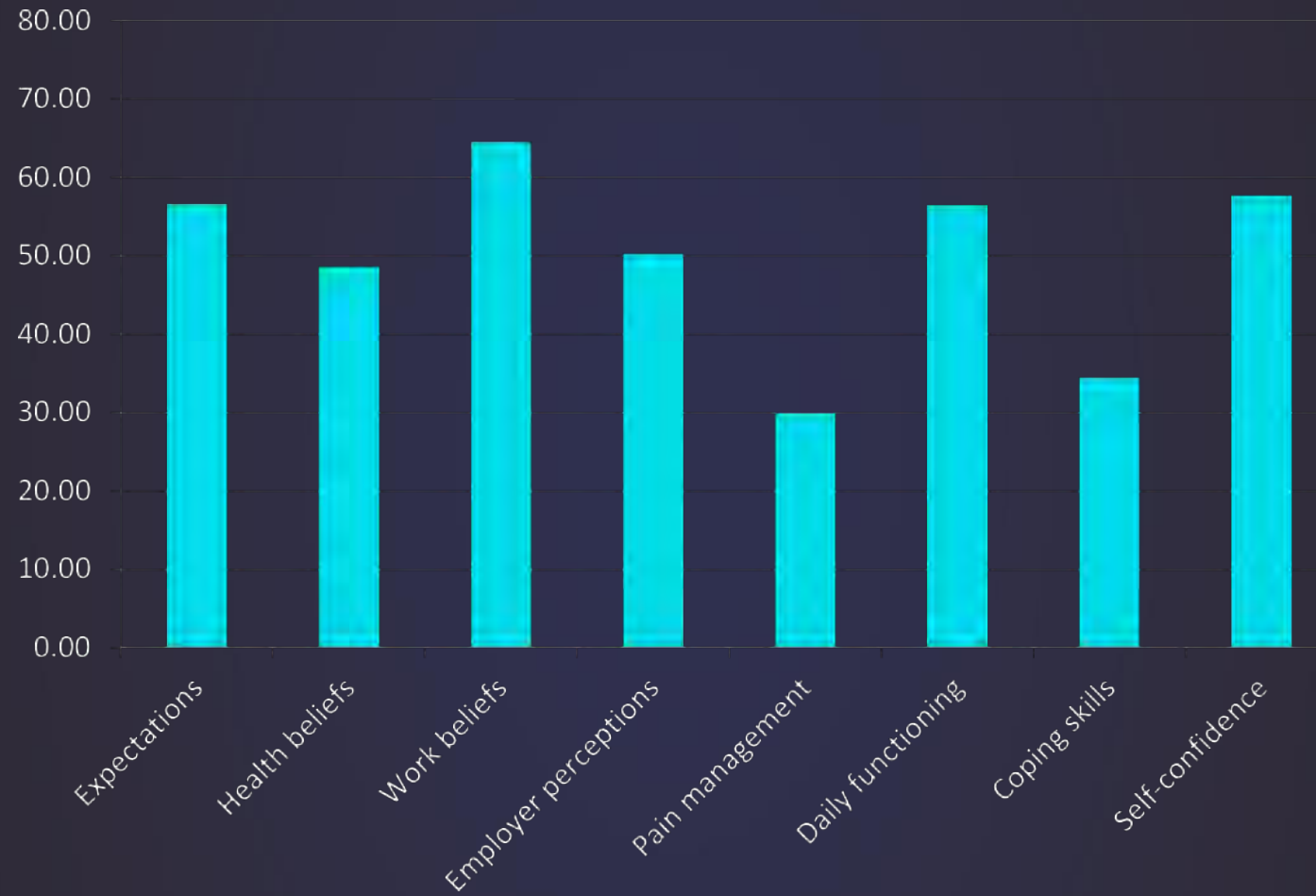
- 28 year old Boilermaker
- Shoulder strain 3 months ago
- Injured at work
- Claim for workers compensation
- Continues with Physio 2 x week, surgical review
- 6 weeks off work
- Back at work 4 hours / 3 days per week

IPAR ANALYSIS

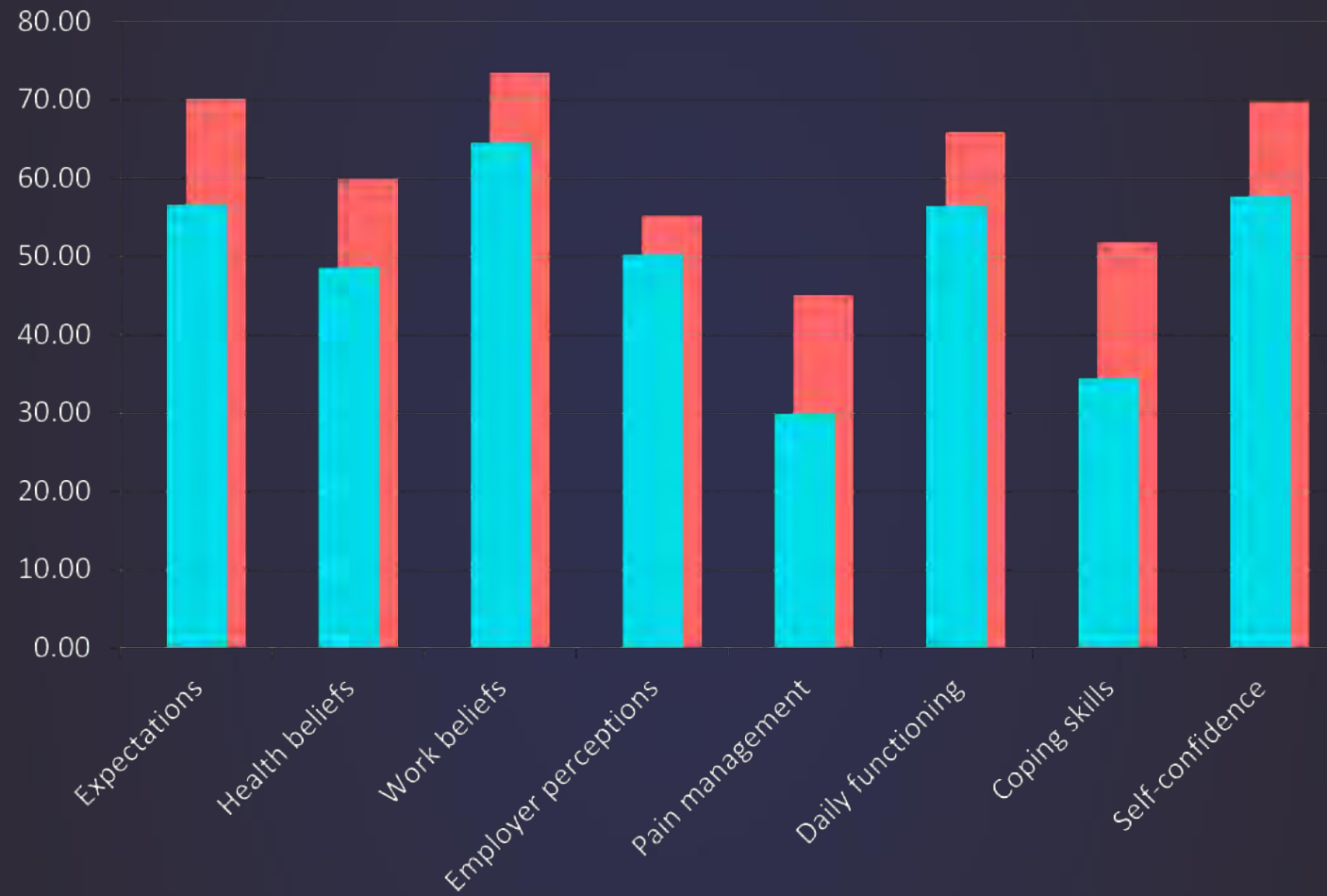
positivum™ biopsychosocial assessment across 2 populations

- **Expectations** about working in the future
- **Health Beliefs** about own health / condition and ability to work
- **Work Beliefs** about being able to get a job, and remain working
- **Employer Perceptions** about hiring people with disabilities
- **Pain Management**
- **Daily Functioning**
- **Coping Skills**
- **Self-confidence** and self-efficacy

RESULTS – SAMPLE A



RESULTS – SAMPLE B



RESULTS

SAMPLE A

Workers Compensation

- Majority musculoskeletal injuries incurred at work
- 10% primary psychological illness at claim lodgement
- Majority 18 month post claim lodgement

SAMPLE B

Disability Employment Services

- Wide variation in presentations
- Congenital disorders, chronic conditions (post cancer), intellectual disabilities, learning disorders
- Many have never worked

WHAT IS GOING ON?

Might having a claim be an explanation for different outcomes?

Might being on compensation delay recovery?

Might being on compensation actually cause harm?

SUMMARY OF CURRENT RESEARCH

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH POOR HEALTH OUTCOMES – PHYSICAL FUNCTION



D Murgatroyd, P Casey, I Cameron, I Harris (2015)

The effect of financial compensation on health outcomes following musculoskeletal injury: a systemic review

PROFESSOR BELINDA GABBE

Head of Pre-Hospital, Emergency and Trauma Unit, Monash University
(Injury Epidemiologist and Physiotherapist)



Odds of returning to work are lower for those with a claim,
Vs private / Medicare funded patients.

At each timeframe: 6, 12, 24 months post accident.

DR NIEKE ELBERS

John Walsh Centre for Rehabilitation and Recovery Research & University of Sydney
(Neuropsychologist)



Medical assessments impact the most negatively on the perception of scheme 'fairness'.

Regular / weekly payments are 'fairer' than systems with a lump sum.

DR GENEVIEVE GRANT

Faculty of Law, Monash University
(Personal Injury Lawyer)



Determined that there is a strong association between a 'stressful claims experience' and poorer long term recovery outcomes.

Most common stressors: understanding what you need to do, time to make decisions, number of medical assessments.

DR MELITA GUIMMARRA

Caulfield Pain Management and Research Centre &
School of Psychological Sciences Monash University



‘Perceived injustice’ was the only factor that uniquely predicted return to work outcome.

Related to consulting a lawyer, not working for at least 12 month post injury, amount of pain, catastrophising, PTSD.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH THEMES

SYSTEMS ARE COMPLEX

DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO

DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE SYSTEM

FEELINGS OF INJUSTICE

SEEK LEGAL ADVICE

UNCLEAR MEDICAL ASSESSMENTS

BLAME OTHERS

CATASTROPHISING

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

SYSTEMS ARE COMPLEX
REDUCE COMPLEXITY

DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE SYSTEM
CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS, GUIDANCE

SEEK LEGAL ADVICE
BUILD TRUST, LISTEN

BLAME OTHERS
PROVIDE CHOICE, EMPOWER

DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO
EXPLAIN THINGS

FEELINGS OF INJUSTICE
LISTEN, SHOW EMPATHY

UNCLEAR MEDICAL ASSESSMENTS
EXPLAIN, SET EXPECTATIONS

CATASTROPHISING
PROVIDE CHOICE, EMPOWER

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

WORKPLACE



- ✓ Consider relevant research findings
- ✓ Provide information
- ✓ Explain and explain again (no jargon!)
- ✓ Develop trust
- ✓ Increase transparency
- ✓ Consider use of IMEs
- ✓ Timely decision making
- ✓ Payment considerations for outcomes, not per session of treatment
- ✓ Consider how to address negative perceptions / rumination / fault / blame
- ✓ Scheme design to reduce 'perverse incentives'

SCHEME

WHAT CAN WE DO DIFFERENTLY?

Understand the
evidence

Plan an
approach

Prioritise

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE

For further information, please contact:

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE

REFERENCES

Institute for Safety, Compensation and Recovery Research (www.iscrr.com.au).

Murgatroyd DF, Casey PP, Cameron ID, and Harris IA (2015)

The effect of financial compensation on health outcomes following musculoskeletal injury: a systemic review.

Murgatroyd DF, Cameron ID, Harris IA (2010)

Understanding the effect of compensation on recovery from severe motor vehicle crash injuries: a qualitative study.

Grant GM, O'Donnell ML, Spittal MJ, Creamer M, Studdert DM (2014)

Relationship between stressfulness of claiming for injury compensation and long-term recovery: a prospective study.



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