



RETURN TO WORK SCHEME

Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme



Government of
South Australia

Draft v1.0



IMPAIRMENT ASSESSOR ACCREDITATION SCHEME

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IMPAIRMENT ASSESSOR ACCREDITATION SCHEME

Purpose

The purpose of the *Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme* (IAAS) is to prescribe the regulatory and service standards Permanent Impairment Assessors (Assessors) are required to meet to be accredited and maintain accreditation under the IAAS.

Through the setting of standards and requirements for Assessors, the IAAS assists in the completion of objective, fair, consistent, and quality assessments of Whole Person Impairment (WPI) arising from a work injury. The assessment of WPI is an important aspect of the Return to Work Scheme.

Introduction

Section 22 of the *Return to Work Act 2014* (the Act) sets out a Scheme for assessing permanent impairment and also requires the establishment of an IAAS to govern the appointment and maintenance of suitably qualified medical practitioners to undertake assessments of permanent impairment (being assessments of WPI).

Under section 22(16) of the Act, the Minister must establish an IAAS for the purposes of WPI. An accreditation will be issued on terms and conditions determined by the Minister and outlined in this document. An assessment of WPI must be made by a medical practitioner who holds a current accreditation issued by the Minister.

Based on their degree of WPI, a worker with permanent impairment that has arisen from a work injury, may be entitled to receive statutory lump sum payments or access to serious injury support.

The assessment process commences when the worker agrees to commence the process, and is completed when the Compensating Authority, the Tribunal or a court, makes one or more determinations based on the WPI assessment report or reports. It includes the request letter, consultation around the selection of an assessor, the examination appointment or appointments, and the assessment report.

GLOSSARY

Assessor	a medical practitioner who holds a current accreditation issued by the Minister in accordance with section 22(17) of the <i>Return to Work Act 2014</i>
Act	the <i>Return to Work Act 2014</i>
Advisory Committee	a Committee established in Part 11 of the Act
AHPRA	the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
Assessment	a Whole Person Impairment Assessment
Compensating Authority	ReturnToWorkSA or a self-insured employer, depending upon which entity has paid, or is liable to pay compensation under the Act
CRPS	Complex Regional Pain Syndrome
GEPIC	Guide to the Evaluation of Psychiatric Impairments for Clinicians
Guidelines	the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> published under section 22(3) of the Act (or the <i>WorkCover Guidelines for the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment</i> , where required)
Impairment Assessment Report	a report prepared by an Accredited Assessor in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i>
The Minister	the Minister to whom the Act is committed under section 5 of the <i>Administrative Arrangements Act 1994</i>
PIRS	Psychiatric Impairment Rating Scale
Requestor	the requestor of the assessment, which can include ReturnToWorkSA, the claims agent or self-insured employer
ReturnToWorkSA	the statutory authority established to provide work injury insurance and regulating the South Australian Return to Work scheme
RPL	recognition of prior learning
RTW Scheme	Return to Work scheme
Service Standards	Standards as detailed under schedule 5 of the Act
Service Requirements	expectations as described within the <i>Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme (IAAS)</i>
Scheme	Return to Work scheme's <i>Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme</i>

1 CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION

Under section 22(17)(b) of the Act, the Minister issues the accreditation to medical practitioners authorised to undertake WPI assessments for the purposes of the RTW Scheme.

To be considered for accreditation by the Minister, an applicant must:

- 1.1 Be a medical practitioner registered with the Medical Board of Australia (under AHPRA).
- 1.2 Have at least 5 years post-graduate experience in one of the specialities listed in the Guide for Systems and Specialities (1.13).
- 1.3 Have no current notations, undertakings, reprimands or relevant conditions recorded against their registration for medical practice.
- 1.4 Have completed the relevant American Medical Association (AMA) training, or other training, specific to body systems specified pursuant to the Training Criteria Table (3.1.5).
- 1.5 Satisfactorily complete the online training required for accreditation and commit to undertaking the ongoing training and assessment requirements described in the Terms and Conditions of Accreditation (3.3).
- 1.6 Declare any real, perceived or potential conflict of interest as a result of becoming an assessor to the Scheme. In assessing whether a real, perceived or potential conflict of interest exists, the assessor must consider at minimum:
 - any personal, professional or pecuniary gain or benefit being received;
 - any existing personal relationships;
 - businesses in which the assessor, their immediate family or their staff has an interest in; and
 - any financial or other personal interest that could, or could be perceived to, influence the assessor in the performance of the services.

A declaration made by the applicant will be considered when determining eligibility for accreditation.

- 1.7 Reside in South Australia if seeking accreditation for body systems that have this requirement specified in Criteria Table (1.12).
- 1.8 Have access to sufficient resources and infrastructure to undertake all administrative and quality assurance activities necessary to successfully and fully undertake the role of an assessor, e.g. e-mail and internet access.
- 1.9 Be in active clinical practice if assessing body systems specified on the Criteria Table (1.12) below. Active clinical practice is defined as treating patients for at least 8 hours per week over 1 year.

The applicant must also provide evidence to ReturnToWorkSA that they:

- 1.10 Have relevant specialist qualifications and experience. See Guide for Systems and Specialities (1.13).
- 1.11 Hold current medical indemnity insurance (at least AU\$5 million) and public liability insurance (at least AU\$10 million).

In determining the eligibility of applicants, the Minister may also have regard to the requirements of the RTW Scheme, the estimated number of assessments likely to be done each year in each body system and, where relevant, the applicant’s prior performance.

1.12 Criteria Table

Criteria	Body Systems – Mandatory	Body Systems – Recommended (Non-Mandatory)
Reside in South Australia (Criteria 1.7)	Upper Extremity, lower Extremity, Spine, ENT, Hearing, Skin, Digestive	Nervous System, Urinary and Reproductive, Respiratory, Visual, Haematopoietic, Endocrine, Skin (Temski), Cardiovascular, Digestive (hernia), Psychiatric
Active Clinical Practice (Criteria 1.9)	Upper Extremity, lower Extremity, Spine, ENT, Hearing, Skin, Digestive	Nervous System, Urinary and Reproductive, Respiratory, Visual, Haematopoietic, Endocrine, Skin (Temski), Cardiovascular, Digestive (hernia), Psychiatric

1.13 Guide for Systems and Specialties – Proposed changes from the existing ‘Guide to eligibility criteria for each body system’

Please refer to *Proposed Key Changes to the IAAS* document.

2 APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process is a 7 step process:

2.1 Application – Complete the application form including which body systems for accreditation, and submit the application form to wpi@rtwsa.com with evidence of:

- AHRPA registration;
- Qualifications;
- Professional Indemnity Insurance;
- Public Liability Insurance;
- Current clinical practice in selected body system(s);
- AMA5, AMA4 training (for visual system) or GEPIC/PIRS (Psychiatric); and
- Previous training (if relevant).

2.2 Confirmation of having read and understood the *Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme* document.

2.3 Eligibility – Applications will be considered against the eligibility criteria set out in the Criteria Table (1.12) and Guide for Systems and Specialties (1.13), with those meeting the criteria provided to the Minister for consideration of accreditation.

2.4 Approval – Applicants approved for accreditation will be advised of their specific training requirements.

2.5 Training – The applicant undertakes the required training, as detailed in this document.

2.6 Testing – The applicant successfully completes the relevant competency assessment/s for their approved body system/s.

2.7 Finalise – Upon successful completion of the above, the applicant receives confirmation of accreditation and their details are published on the [Whole Person Impairment Assessor List](#).

3 ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Initial Training

- 3.1.1 The methodology in the Guidelines is largely based on the *American Medical Association's Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment, Fifth Edition* (AMA5), with the exception of the visual system which is based upon *American Medical Association's Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment, Fourth Edition* (AMA4) and Psychiatric body systems which is based upon GEPIC or PIRS. For this reason, it is a requirement that all applicants complete training as specified in the Criteria Table (3.1.5).
- 3.1.2 In order to be eligible for accreditation, the applicant must have completed the required training and successfully pass the competency assessment required for each relevant body system module, as well as any amendment or substitution in relation to the Guidelines prior to their implementation.
- 3.1.3 RPL may be considered where the training completed is relevant and comparable (i.e. for a Scheme using similar guidelines) and has been undertaken in the previous 5 years. Competency assessment may still be required.
- 3.1.4 Applicants who have requested RPL for training must complete training in the compulsory introductory 'Impairment Assessor Training Introduction' and the 'Impairment Assessment Guidelines Core module' as they contain information specific to the Guidelines and the RTW Scheme.

3.1.5 Training Criteria Table

Criteria	Body Systems – Mandatory	Body Systems – Recommended (Non-Mandatory)
Completed AMA5 Training (Criteria for Accreditation 1.4)	Upper Extremity, lower Extremity, Spine, ENT, Skin, Digestive	Nervous System, Urinary and Reproductive, Respiratory, Haematopoietic, Endocrine, Skin (Temski), Cardiovascular, Digestive (hernia), Hearing
Completed AMA4 Training (Criteria for Accreditation 1.4)		Visual
GEPIC or PIRS (Criteria for Accreditation 1.4)	Psychiatric	
CRPS (Criteria for Accreditation 1.4)	CRPS	

3.2 Ongoing Training

- 3.2.1 Assessors must complete the online modules and associated assessments specific to their accredited Body Systems every 3 years to maintain their accreditation.
- 3.2.2 Assessors must complete any training and/or competency assessment following identification of ongoing report compliance or quality issues within 6 weeks of notification by ReturnToWorkSA.
- 3.2.3 Assessors must complete the required training for any amendment or substitution of the Guidelines prior to their implementation.
- 3.2.4 Assessors must attend at least two WPI training activities provided by ReturnToWorkSA annually. These could include (but are not restricted to) WPI forums, training sessions, group sessions or 1:1 peer sessions and access via online platform/recording if unable to attend in person.

3.3 Terms and Conditions of Accreditation

In order to maintain accreditation in this Scheme, an assessor must comply with the each of following terms and conditions of accreditation.

- 3.3.1 Assessors must adhere to the Terms and Conditions, Service Requirements, Training, Ongoing Accreditation and Quality Management requirements as stated in this document and Service Standards ([Our service commitments \(rtwsa.com\)](http://rtwsa.com)) on an ongoing basis and advise ReturnToWorkSA within 7 business days if unable to do so.
- 3.3.2 Assessors must continue to meet the Criteria for Accreditation eligibility criteria and advise ReturnToWorkSA within 7 business days if they no longer meet any one or more of the eligibility criteria.
- 3.3.3 Assessors must only conduct assessments in person, not on the telephone or via an online platform (e.g. Zoom or Microsoft Teams). They must provide assessments and reports of permanent impairment in accordance with the Guidelines, the Act and using the relevant ReturnToWorkSA mandatory assessment report template (note: self-insured employers may determine their own report template).
- 3.3.4 Assessors must utilise ReturnToWorkSA's online services portal to receive report requests and submit completed assessments (note: this is not applicable for workers with claims managed by self-insured employers).

- 3.3.5 Assessors must ensure that services are invoiced in accordance with the current *Permanent Impairment Assessment Services Medical Fee Schedule and Policy*.
- 3.3.6 Assessors must provide assessments without bias and in a way that does not give rise to any apprehension of bias in the performance of their responsibilities.
- 3.3.7 Assessors must declare any real, perceived or potential conflict of interest to the requestor as soon as they are aware. In assessing whether an actual or potential conflict of interest exists, the assessor must consider at a minimum:
- any personal, professional or pecuniary gain or benefit being received;
 - any existing personal relationships;
 - businesses in which the assessor, their immediate family or their staff has an interest; and
 - any financial or other personal interest that could, or could be perceived to, influence the assessor in the performance of the services.

The requestor must consider the above declaration in determining if the assessment should proceed with that assessor.

- 3.3.8 Assessors must notify ReturnToWorkSA in writing within 7 business days if charged, found guilty or convicted, or fined for a criminal offence involving dishonesty or an offence punishable by a period of imprisonment.
- 3.3.9 Assessors must notify ReturnToWorkSA in writing within 7 business days if made aware they are currently being investigated by AHPRA or any formalised allegations of unethical conduct against the assessor or any alleged breaches of any applicable guidelines relating to unethical conduct.
- 3.3.10 Assessors must make themselves available to appear in the South Australian Employment Tribunal (SAET) to provide evidence if requested by the SAET in relation to an assessment.
- 3.3.11 Assessors must not have provided any form of treatment, advice, independent examination or assessment in relation to the worker within the last 5 years, unless otherwise agreed with the requestor.

3.4 Service Requirements

The assessor must comply with the Service Requirements of accreditation which are outlined below:

- 3.4.1 Operate consistently with the relevant standards set by each assessor's professional body and the IAAS.
- 3.4.2 Adhere to the Medical Board of Australia's Good Medical Practice: A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia: <https://www.medicalboard.gov.au/codes-guidelines-policies/code-of-conduct.aspx>
- 3.4.3 Comply with the confidentiality requirements of the Act and, where applicable, the *Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988* and any other law relevant to health records.
- 3.4.4 Take reasonable steps to preserve the privacy and modesty of the worker during the assessment.
- 3.4.5 Refrain from offering any advice or comment to the worker about their rights or entitlements relating to their claim or any legal matter relating to their claim.
- 3.4.6 Use their discretion as to whether it is appropriate to notify the worker and/or the worker's treating medical practitioner directly by phone or letter about any incidental clinical finding during an assessment of the worker.
- 3.4.7 Use online technology as required to receive, access and distribute relevant information in relation to the assessment e.g. online imaging portals, ReturnToWorkSA online services portal.
- 3.4.8 See the worker within 6 weeks of the appointment being requested, unless agreed and documented between the requestor, worker and assessor.
- 3.4.9 Provide assessment reports within 10 business days of the assessment being completed, or as agreed, and documented between the requestor and the assessor, which must be noted in the report.
- 3.4.10 Provide the assessment report in accordance with:
 - a) Part 14, Division 4 – Content of expert report from the *Uniform Civil Rules 2020*, and
 - b) Part 14 – Rule 66 – Expert evidence from the *South Australian Employment Tribunal Rules 2022*.

- 3.4.11 Provide up-to-date contact details to ReturnToWorkSA for the purpose of publication on the [Whole Person Impairment Assessors List](#). Assessors must notify ReturnToWorkSA in writing within 10 business days of any change to name, contact details or accreditation status.
- 3.4.12 Ensure that the location of the assessment complies with the premises standards relevant to the assessor's college or association e.g. disability access, first aid etc.
- 3.4.13 Refrain from offering any opinion on the worker's medical or surgical management by other medical practitioners unless failing to do so would cause detriment to the worker's health.

3.5 Declaration Requirements

An assessor must complete the *Impairment Assessor Accreditation Declaration* (the Declaration) annually, on or by the anniversary date of their accreditation approval notification from ReturnToWorkSA. Assessors must submit the Declaration to ReturnToWorkSA and attest to the following, remaining current over the previous 12 months:

- a) AHPRA registration currency;
- b) No notations, undertakings, reprimands or relevant conditions recorded against their registration for medical practice in the previous 12 months;
- c) Professional Indemnity Insurance maintained to the requisite level of \$5 million dollars;
- d) Public Liability Insurance maintained to the requisite level of \$10 million dollars;
- e) Ongoing training requirements, as set out in this document and otherwise prescribed by ReturnToWorkSA, have been met;
- f) Compliance with Peer Support Requirements as specified in the Quality Management (4) section.

Upon successful completion of their Declaration, the assessor will receive confirmation of their ongoing accreditation. Their details will continue to be published on the [Whole Person Impairment Assessors List](#).

3.6 Suspension or Cancellation of Accreditation

- 3.6.1 The Scheme provides for the suspension or cancellation of accreditation by the Minister on specified grounds as outlined in section 22(17)(c) of the Act.
- 3.6.2 Grounds which may result in the assessor being suspended or removed from the list of assessors by the Minister, precluding the assessor from conducting WPI assessments for the RTW Scheme, includes circumstances where the assessor:
- a) Frequently fails to apply the methodology set out in the Act, the Guidelines or relevant AMA Guide.
 - b) Fails to meet the Terms and Conditions, Service Requirements, Ongoing Accreditation Requirements or Quality Management Requirements outlined within the IAAS;
 - c) Is the subject of complaints substantiated by investigation, the frequency and seriousness of which will be considered on a case by case basis.
- 3.6.3 An assessor may be asked to provide reasons as to why their accreditation should not be suspended or cancelled (and name removed from the Whole Person Impairment Assessors List on the ReturnToWorkSA website).
- 3.6.4 The decision to suspend or cancel an accreditation is made by the Minister, supported by evidence provided by ReturnToWorkSA.

Action other than cancellation or suspension

- 3.6.5 The assessor may be subject to further requirements for remedial action as an alternative to the Minister suspending or cancelling the accreditation. Examples of remedial action may include retraining or coaching or the removal of a Body System from the accreditation by the Minister where retraining or coaching has not resulted in improvement.
- 3.6.6 Any remedial action may be at the assessor's cost.

4 QUALITY MANAGEMENT

ReturnToWorkSA is dedicated to supporting assessors to deliver high quality assessments that:

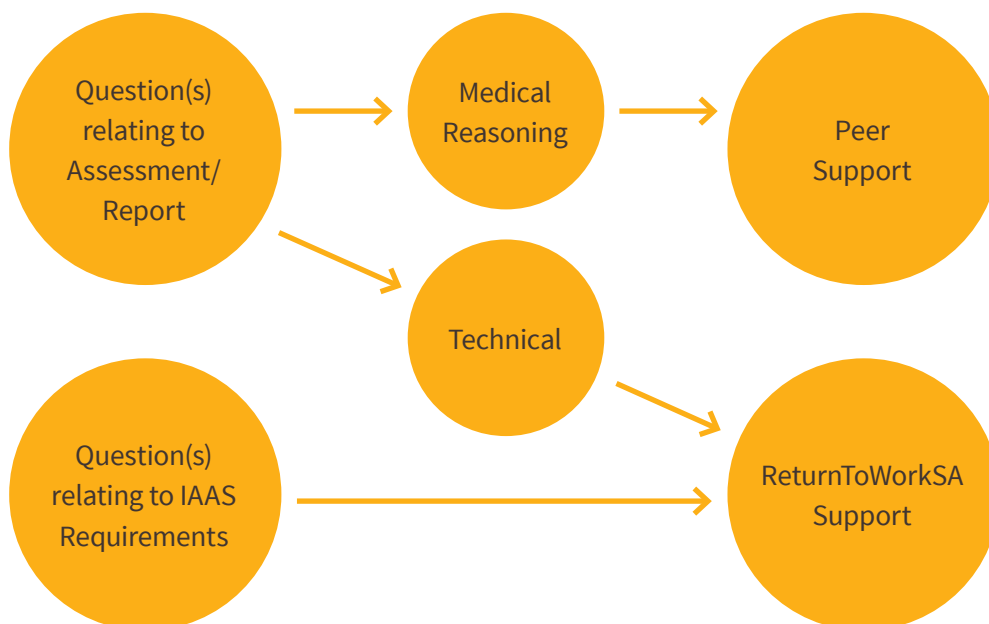
- are consistent, objective and fair;
- contain sound, clear and justified medical reasoning;
- comply with the *Impairment Assessment Guidelines*, the Act and the relevant American Medical Association (AMA) Guides; and
- facilitate a positive experience for workers.

Assessors will be supported throughout the various stages of the WPI assessment process based on their individual needs.

4.1 Pending Assessment Support

Support is available to assessors for report specific assessment issues, concerns or questions that are related to assessments prior to submission to the requestor.

Any discussion, guidance and support must be general in nature. The worker whose WPI is being assessed must not be identified by the assessor.



4.1.1 Any issues or questions relating to medical reasoning can be addressed through the Peer Support Program. To access this program, the assessor should contact (08) 8238 5960 or e-mail to wpi@rtwsa.com and provide the following details:

- assessor name;
- contact details;
- the relevant Body System and injury; and
- a brief description of the nature of the issue.

4.1.2 The Peer Support Reviewer will be a specialist accredited in the relevant body system. The Peer Support Reviewer will discuss and provide guidance on issues related to medical consistency, reasoning or any other concerns. The Peer Support Reviewer will contact the assessor to discuss appropriate strategies within 2 business days.

4.1.3 If the assessor encounters any issues or questions relating to technical issues that do not involve medical reasoning or relate to general requirements of the IAAS, the assessor may contact an Impairment Assessment Advisor directly on (08) 8238 5960 or e-mail wpi@rtwsa.com.

4.2 Post Assessment and Determination Support

This support is available to assessors for general issues, concerns or questions that are related to assessments that have previously been finalised.

While support is available for all assessors as required, for those assessors who are unable to achieve a compliance rating average of 80% at first review annually, support will be provided as described below.

Assessors must comply with the Quality Management Process, which includes participation and engagement with the Peer Support Program.

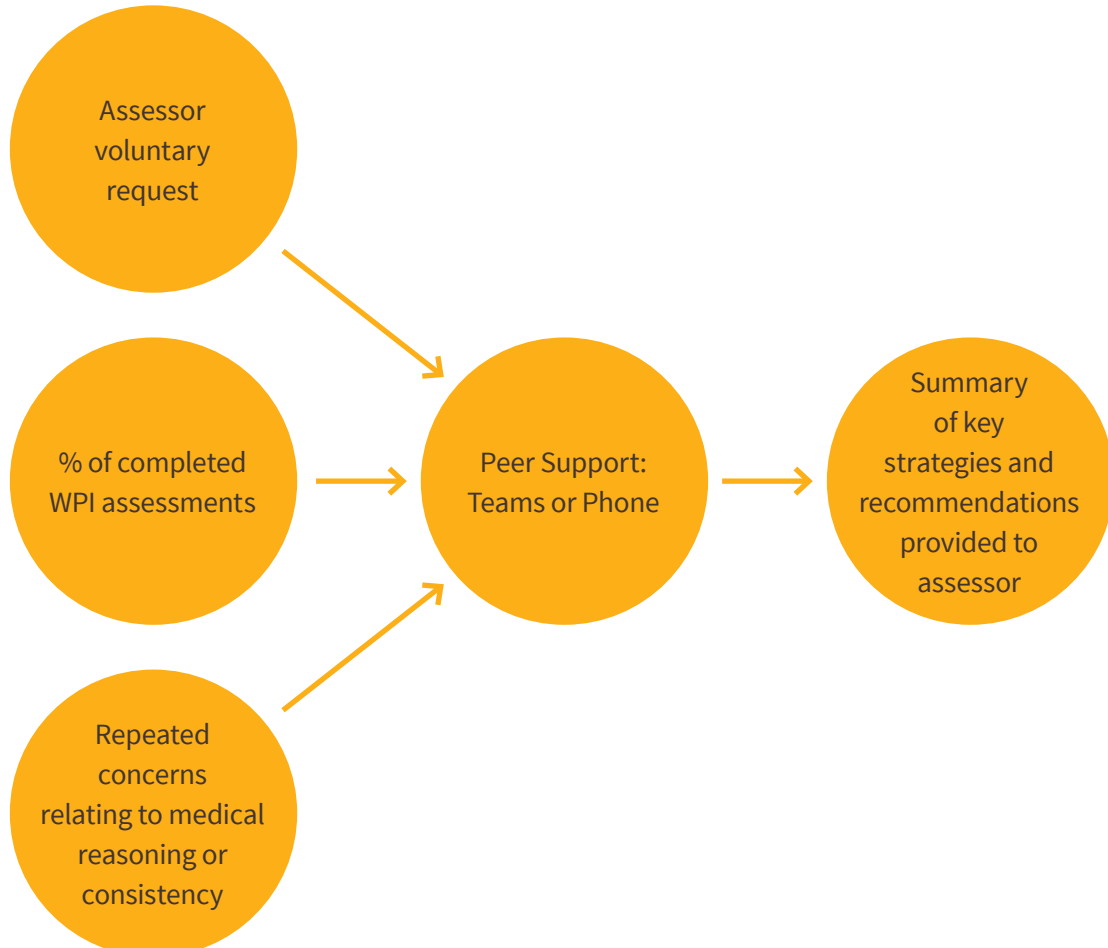
ReturnToWorkSA will:

4.2.1 Monitor services provided by assessors through assessment report audits and performance data to ensure the appropriate delivery of WPI assessment services and service requirements are met.

4.2.2 Obtain worker feedback via anonymous surveys.

- 4.2.3 Provide assessors with access to specific online reporting data including (but not restricted to):
- compliance data relating to consistent application of the current *Impairment Assessment Guidelines*;
 - average timeframes relating to appointment times following request;
 - average timeframes relating to appointment date and report submission; and
 - worker survey feedback.
- 4.2.4 Facilitate a Peer Support Program to address issues relating to medical consistency and reasoning.
- 4.2.5 Monitor and review assessor eligibility for accreditation including compliance with Ongoing Accreditation Requirements.
- 4.2.6 Determine and make available additional ongoing training that assessors may be required to undertake which may be at the assessor's cost.

Post Assessment Peer Support



4.2.7 Finalised assessments are eligible for review under the Peer Support Program under any of the following circumstances:

- a) Voluntary request by the assessor: This service is designed for assessors who wish to discuss general matters relating to medical reasoning.
- b) Percentage of completed assessments per year: This Peer Support is provided to assessors that complete in excess of # assessments per annual accreditation period.
- c) Following repeated unresolved issues of non-compliance to the Impairment Assessment Guidelines potentially relating to medical issues identified by ReturnToWorkSA.

4.2.8 The Peer Support Reviewer is a specialist accredited in the same Body System. The Peer Support Reviewer will discuss and provide guidance on medical consistency, reasoning or any other concerns. The Peer Support Reviewer will contact the assessor to provide feedback and discuss appropriate strategies, if required.

4.2.9 Following peer support, the Peer Support Reviewer provides the assessor a summary of key strategies and recommendations the assessor can consider in relation to future assessments. This summary will also be provided to ReturnToWorkSA if related to 4.2.7 b) and 4.27 c) above.

Post Assessment and Determination ReturnToWorkSA Support

4.2.10 For support concerning matters that are not of a medical nature, ReturnToWorkSA will provide support and guidance to assessors on a case-by-case basis which may include, but not limited to:

- a) Review and discussion of current accreditation requirements.
- b) A review of appropriate timeframes and strategies for appointment setting and report submission.
- c) Providing access to training sessions, forums or peer group sessions.
- d) Further chapter specific online module and associated assessment training and support.

4.3 Technical Compliance Review

ReturnToWorkSA, its claims agents or self-insured employers (a Requestor) will undertake a technical compliance review of a WPI assessment report issued by the assessors, to ensure consistent application of, and compliance with, the Act and the Guidelines, relevant American Medical Association Guidelines and relevant case law. The assessor may be contacted for clarification about a report or discuss any possible issues relating to assessments that are not finalised.

4.4 ReturnToWorkSA Monitoring and Reporting

To ensure compliance with this Scheme, ReturnToWorkSA may record and report on the following information:

- 4.4.1 Concerns raised by claims agents, workers, workers representatives, self-insurers, or other parties.
- 4.4.2 Statistical information inclusive but not restricted to compliance and timeframes.
- 4.4.3 Information from and relating to assessment reports and interactions with assessors through the report compliance review process.
- 4.4.4 Complaints received (whether investigated or not).

Reporting undertaken of ReturnToWorkSA's monitoring of the IAAS will be published on ReturnToWorkSA's website at least annually.

5 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

- 5.1 Assessors who fail to meet the Criteria for Accreditation, Terms and Conditions of Accreditation, Service Requirements, Ongoing Accreditation and/or Quality Management Requirements will be contacted by ReturnToWorkSA. ReturnToWorkSA will assess alleged non compliances on a case by case basis.
- 5.2 The investigation of complaints, performance or compliance issues will be managed in accordance with principles of procedural fairness, which include:
- The right to be provided with the details of any complaint, performance or compliance issue;
 - The right to be treated without bias and decisions being based upon relevant evidence;
 - People likely to be adversely affected by a decision will receive all relevant information, and have an opportunity to present information and have their response taken into consideration before a final decision is made.
- 5.3 If an assessor is unsatisfied with the Performance Management Process, they are encouraged to refer to the [ReturnToWorkSA Complaints Policy](#).
- 5.4 If an assessor is dissatisfied with how ReturnToWorkSA has managed the complaint, they have the right to refer the matter to the State Ombudsman: [Ombudsman SA](#) for investigation.

6 COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT PROCESS

- 6.1 Workers, their representatives, requestors and assessors can lodge complaints in line with the [ReturnToWorkSA Complaints Policy](#) outlined under the Act, where they either hold a concern about non-compliance with the Service Standards set out in Schedule 5 of the Act or that an assessor is not fulfilling the requirements of the *Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme*.
- 6.2 The first step in making a complaint is to contact the person/organisation that the matter relates to directly and discussing the issue at hand.
- 6.3 For detailed information relating to the complaints process, please refer to the [ReturnToWorkSA Complaints Policy](#).
- 6.4 Complaints received by ReturnToWorkSA in relation to an assessor's conduct during an assessment may be investigated consistent with the above process. Each complaint will be managed in a professional and confidential manner with the assessor being provided with the opportunity to respond.
- 6.5 Where appropriate, the complaint may be referred to the relevant health care complaints body for investigation and appropriate action depending upon the nature of the complaint.

IMPAIRMENT ASSESSOR ACCREDITATION SCHEME

Enquiries: 13 18 55

400 King William Street, Adelaide

South Australia 5000

wpi@rtwsa.com

www.rtwsa.com

Free information support services:

TTY (deaf or have hearing / speech impairment):

Phone 13 36 77 then ask for 13 18 55

Speak & Listen (speech-to-speech):

Phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 13 18 55

Languages other than English:

Please ring the Interpreting and Translating Centre on

1800 280 203 and ask them to contact us on 13 18 55

Braille, audio, or e-text:

Call 13 18 55 and ask for required format.



**Government of
South Australia**

PROPOSED KEY CHANGES TO THE IMPAIRMENT ASSESSOR ACCREDITATION SCHEME (IAAS)

Transitional Arrangements

- The proposed IAAS includes some additional requirements for assessors not present in the current scheme.
- If the proposed IAAS is approved by the Minister after the general consultation period and consultation with the Minister's Advisory Committee, no assessors who are currently accredited will lose their existing accreditation and all will transition to the new Scheme.
- The new requirements set out in the Criteria Table (1.12, Page 7) and the proposed changes to the 'Guide for Systems and Specialties' (section 7 of this document) will only apply to future applicants who seek to become accredited.
- In relation to the Mandatory requirements of the Training Criteria Table (3.1.5, Page 11), these assessors will be provided 1 full year in which to complete this training to maintain their accreditation.

1. Criteria for Accreditation

- AHPRA: Addition of current undertakings or reprimands recorded against registration for medical practice.
- Criteria Table: Accreditation for some body systems have some mandatory requirements as specified in the Criteria Table (1.12, Page 7) which relate to 1.7 (Residential Location) and 1.9 (Active Clinical Practice).
- Training Criteria Table: Accreditation for some body systems have some mandatory requirements as specified in the Training Criteria Table (3.1.5, Page 11) which relates to Criteria 1.4 (Relevant AMA Training).
- Addition of a Conflict of Interest Requirements relating to general accreditation.

2. Terms and Conditions of Accreditation

- Adhere to IAAS Requirements and advise ReturnToWorkSA if unable to do so within 7 business days.
- Required use of ReturnToWorkSA's online services portal to receive report requests and submit completed assessments.
- Invoicing to be consistent with the current Permanent Impairment Assessment Services Medical Fee Schedule and Policy.
- Addition of a Conflict of Interest Requirement relating to individual assessments.

3. Service Requirements

- Required use of online technology relating to receiving and distributing relevant information.

- Providing reports in accordance with uniform Civil and South Australian Employment Tribunal Rules.
- Ensuring assessment location complies with relevant standards.

4. **Removal of Administrative Requirements section: Some previous components within ‘Terms and Conditions’ and ‘Services Requirements’.**

5. **Declaration and Ongoing Training Requirements**

- Accredited assessors will be required to complete a yearly declaration.
- Ongoing training requirements for accredited assessors.

6. **Quality Management**

- Support to be provided for assessors for medical and/or technical questions.
- Data to be provided to assessors relating to compliance, timeframes and worker surveys.
- Complaints process alignment with ReturnToWorkSA Complaints policy.

7. **Guide for ‘Systems and Specialities’**

- Table will be replacing previously titled ‘Guide to eligibility criteria for each body system’. Proposed changes to this table are:
 - a) Removal of **General Practitioners** to be able to deliver assessments: Will only apply to new accreditations. Currently accredited General Practitioners will retain their accreditation.
 - b) **General Physicians** have additional accreditation to assess **Lower Extremities**.
 - c) **Neurologists** do not have full **lower extremity** accreditation and that the **lower extremity** be **limited to peripheral nerves** and that they have additional accreditation to assess upper extremity peripheral nerves.
 - d) Plastic and Reconstruction Surgeon has additional accreditation to assess **facial nerves** in the **Central & Peripheral Nervous System**.
 - e) To assess cauda equina, assessors need to be accredited in both **Spine** and **Nervous System**.
 - f) **Thoracic surgeons** to be able to assess **Traumatic Hiatus Hernia**.
 - g) Additional category of specialist **Haematologist – Haematopoietic**.
 - h) **Rheumatologists** may assess people with **endocrine** disorders, e.g. thyroid. Endocrine disorders may present with rheumatological manifestations.
 - i) Removal of **Public Health Category**.
 - j) **Rheumatologist** able to assess **digestive system**.
 - k) Assessors trained in the upper ex, lower ex or spine body systems to undertake assessments of **hernia** only from 0% to 5% WPI (including GPs and Occupational Physicians).