TAC CONTACT DETAILS

Telephone:
1300 654 329
1800 332 556 (toll-free outside the Melbourne metropolitan area)
8:00am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday

Please have your TAC claim number ready when you call.

Visit:
TAC Reception
60 Brougham Street, Geelong
8:30am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday

Write to:
TAC, PO Box 742
Geelong, VIC 3220

Website:
www.tac.vic.gov.au

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Recycled Paper
As you concentrate on your rehabilitation in hospital, you may be wondering how your spinal cord injury will affect your ability to work.

- Will you need training and support to help find the right job for you?
- Will you be able to return to the job you had at the time of the accident?
- If so, will you need to arrange a different set of duties at your workplace?
- Does the workplace need to be modified?
- Do you need to consider part-time employment?
- Would working as a volunteer help you ease back into the workforce?

An occupational physician can see you in the hospital to help answer questions such as these. Occupational physicians are doctors who specialise in helping people who have had a serious accident return to their old job, change careers or get into the workforce for the first time.

They are experienced in working with people who have had spinal cord injuries and will work closely with your rehabilitation team to help you adjust to your new circumstances and live as independent a life as possible.

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

If you’d like to find out more about how an occupational physician or the TAC can help you return to work, please talk to the rehabilitation team or call your TAC case manager.
BENEFITS OF WORKING
Exploring work options is an important part of your rehabilitation. People with a spinal cord injury who work will:

- Have improved mental health. People are happier when they’re working because it gives them a sense of satisfaction, achievement and empowerment
- Be re-admitted to hospital less. The increased physical and mental activity of work contributes to a person’s overall well being
- Enjoy more social relationships. Work is one of the primary places where people interact
- Have more opportunities to learn skills and develop talents. People who focus on employment are more likely to build a satisfying career
- Enjoy a more balanced and higher quality life.

Remember, the earlier you start thinking and talking about work, the sooner you’ll be able to enjoy the benefits of working.

“Getting back to work is about more than just earning money. It’s about getting back to living. Work gives you something to get up for, something to achieve and a sense of self worth. I never realised how important that was.” – Jayden Croft, TAC spinal client.
HOW AN OCCUPATIONAL PHYSICIAN CAN HELP YOU

The aim of an occupational physician is to work with you, your family, your employer and your rehabilitation team to plan and support your return or entry into the workforce. They will do this at a time that’s right for you.

An occupational physician can:

- Discuss your employment goals and interests and any concerns you may have about working
- Talk with you about your work and study history
- Help you find a job if you are out of work
- Explore options with you such as retraining or study
- Talk about the job you had at the time of the accident (if relevant)
- Contact your employer and talk about how and when you can return to work
- Visit and assess your workplace to see if it needs to be modified
- Educate your employer and your work mates about spinal cord injury
- Discuss the duties you can and can’t do a work
- Talk with you and your employer about alternative duties or returning to work gradually
- Provide advice to you and your employer on whether there are restrictions or equipment needs for your return to work
- Discuss how best to manage your return to work, such as when to take breaks
- Talk about travelling to and from work
- Stay in touch after you have returned to work and provide ongoing support when needed
- Consult and work with other return to work specialists, if needed.
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