

Vocational Rehabilitation Services for People with Musculoskeletal Pain

Trialling stay-at-work and return-to-work supports for people living with musculoskeletal conditions who can't get ACC

Wellbeing Budget 2023

This initiative will help people with musculoskeletal pain or impairments to stay in or move into work through cooperation between the person, rehabilitation professionals, employment specialists and employers.

The Government is investing \$3.394 million over two years (2023/24 to 2024/25) to test delivery of vocational rehabilitation and pain management services from ACC providers in two urban regions and deliver them to 150 people living with musculoskeletal pain or impairments.

- The review of Active Labour Market Programmes identified a large gap in stay-at-work and return-to-work supports for people with musculoskeletal conditions who are ineligible for ACC services. This includes the approximately 27,000 people who are receiving a benefit because their work capacity is reduced due to musculoskeletal impairments and who are ineligible for ACC support. Many of them remain on benefit long-term due to gaps in support tailored to their needs.
- Vocational rehabilitation service providers will be contracted to provide work readiness, rehabilitation and pain management support, while MSD staff will help with job placements and post-placement support and work with employers to improve their confidence in retaining staff with musculoskeletal impairments.
- Some groups of people experience higher rates of musculoskeletal pain or impairments, including Māori, women, older people and Pacific people.
- The early provision of vocational rehabilitation services and coordination between health, rehabilitation and employment professionals, alongside supportive employers, can benefit people with musculoskeletal pain or impairments.
- This funding will also enable MSD to evaluate an existing vocational rehabilitation service in Taranaki.
- Insights gained from this initiative will inform potential expansion of the service in the future.

Costs (\$m, operating)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	TOTAL
		1.658	1.736			3.394