

MEDIA RELEASE

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Occupational Injury Under Research Spotlight

A team of Queensland researchers has successfully won funding to conduct a study which aims to reduce the human and financial burden of chronic occupational injuries for workers, employers and the wider community.

The University of Queensland will lead the study, in conjunction with academic and industry partners, after successfully securing a \$193,000 Australian Research Council Linkage Grant.

According to lead investigator and director of UQ's Centre for Military and Veterans' Health Professor Niki Ellis, the team will conduct a trial measuring the impact of patient self-management on vocational rehabilitation for chronic compensated disorders.

"Workplace injuries result in human suffering and are costly for those injured, who can experience chronic disability, a sense of powerlessness and unemployment," said Professor Ellis.

"Self management, which equips patients with the skills to handle the day-to-day impact of pain on their lives, has been shown to be effective in helping people manage other conditions such as Arthritis and Diabetes.

"We will investigate whether the addition of self management to occupational rehabilitation can lead to factors such as improved health and well-being, decreased pain, earlier return-to-work and a more efficient use of resources."

Patients who meet criteria for the trial will be recruited from clinics in the Health Services Australia (HAS) Group, a national provider of vocational rehabilitation, and divided into an intervention group, and a control group who will receive usual care.

Researchers will also collaborate with The Workers' Compensation Regulatory Authority (Q-COMP) and Motor Accident Insurance Commission (MAIC).

"We anticipate the results of this research to support existing evidence which suggests a move away from policy based on illness and compensation to policy which has a greater focus on prevention and provides incentives for wellness," said Professor Ellis.

CMVH, a consortium of the University of Queensland, University of Adelaide and Charles Darwin University, is dedicated to innovatively seeking solutions to military and veterans' health issues through research, education, e-Health and public debate.

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