



the
COLLABORATIVE
Partnership
to improve work participation

A national effort by public, private and not-for-profit organisations to improve work participation



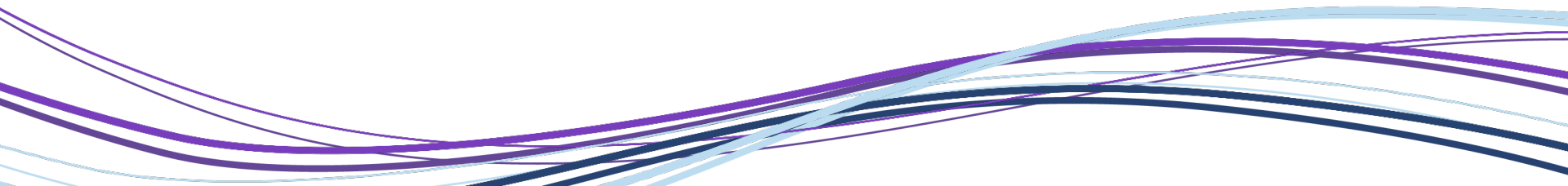
Partners



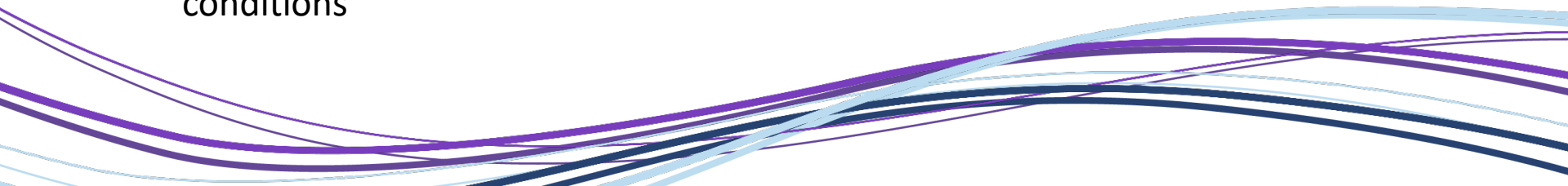
The Collaborative Partnership to improve work participation

Focus on aligning the Australia's income support systems to delivery better outcomes for people with temporary or permanent physical or mental health conditions by:

- breaking down the support system silos
- helping employers reduce barriers to employment
- helping GPs to support work participation
- supporting employees to better understand the importance of good work in their health and wellbeing



Four priority areas

1. **Cross sector system** – examining data and services across compensation and benefit systems, identifying the flow of people through systems, finding opportunities to improve services
 2. **Employee awareness** – improving employees' understanding, promoting their role in using work as a part of their recovery
 3. **GP support** – developing nationally consistent approaches that will help GPs use work as a part of recovery
 4. **Employer mobilisation** – examining attitudes and barriers and improving employers' capacity to provide work opportunities for people with health conditions
- 

Research findings – Cross-Sector Systems

In Australia, during 2015-16*

786K

people who were unable to work due to ill health, injury or disability received income support

6.5M

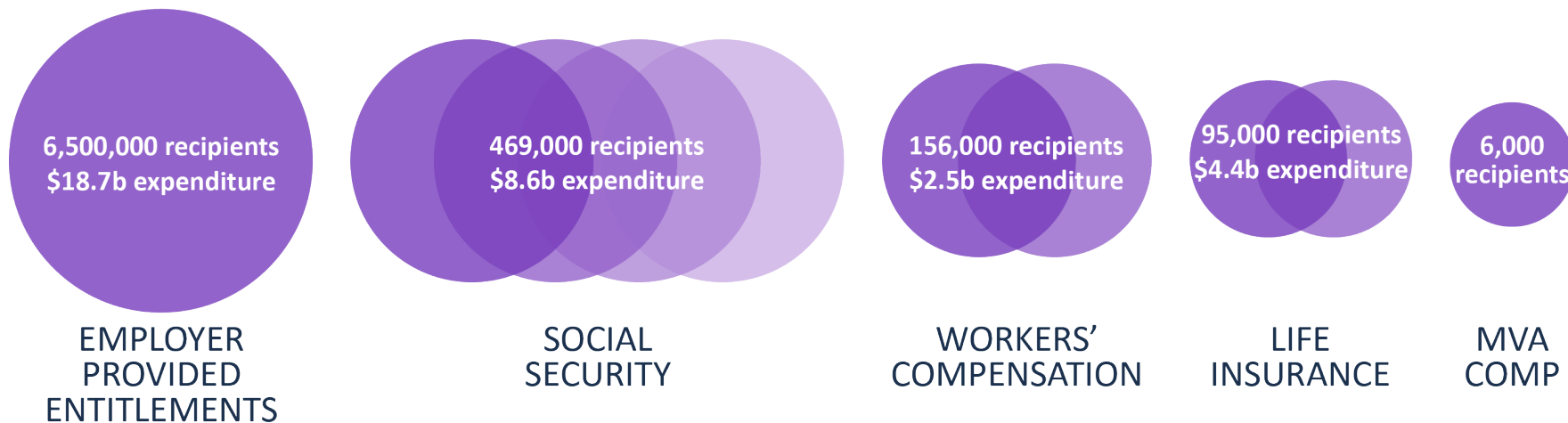
additional people accessed employer provided entitlements for short periods of work incapacity

\$37.2
BILLION

was spent on income support for these people during the year

*Estimates by Monash University


Income support systems




*Estimates by Monash University

Employee Awareness


Findings:

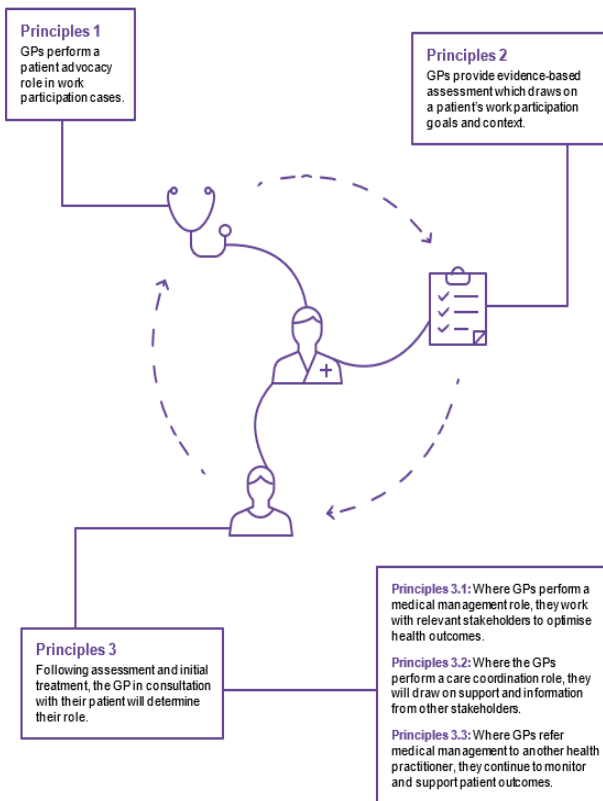
- Most difficult aspect of being unable to work is social isolation
 - Complexity of the 'system' is overwhelming
 - Lack of understanding and one size fits all approach
 - Wanted to work and had been looking for work
- 

GP Support Project

- Provide support to GPs regarding work participation
 - Development of a set of national principles of the role of GPs, relative to other stakeholders, in supporting work participation
 - The GP's role can vary in each case, and a consistent understanding is required
- 

Themes from stakeholder consultations

1. Empowerment – greater individual choice and control
 2. Communication – open and effective with GPs
 3. Team Based Care – a better approach to care coordination
 4. Health Benefits of Work – embedding promotion in GP practice
 5. Capacity – identifying capacity and ability
 6. Barriers – impediments to participation in good work
- 



Principles on the role of the GP in supporting

Employer Mobilisation Research

- Explores employer attitudes, motivations and experiences towards recruiting, supporting or accommodating people with a physical or mental health condition, illness or disability
- Survey of 2,457 managers Australia-wide
- Included business of all sizes, public and private

the
COLLABORATIVE
Partnership
to improve work participation

Report—Snapshot

EMPLOYER MOBILISATION RESEARCH

Understanding behaviours, attitudes and intentions of employers in Australia towards recruiting, supporting and accommodating people with health conditions or disabilities

December 2018

- Workforce participation for working age Australians with a temporary or permanent physical or mental health conditions has remained the same since 2003
- Employers play an important role in improving work participation rates for people with a health condition or disability yet may not have the resources, capability or willingness to provide good work
- This study was undertaken to better understand the barriers for employers with the aim of supporting employers to provide work opportunities for people with a health condition and retaining in the workforce

The research involved a survey of 2,457 people involving in hiring and management of staff and/or development of staff policies and initiatives, which resulted in key employer segments. This was followed by a further 56 in-depth interviews to gain rich insight within each segment on their experiences, practices and perceptions of organisational openness, confidence and capacity to support people with a health condition or disability.

Sample breakdown: Private sector, n=1,441; Public sector, n=1,006; 1-19 employees, n=698; 20-199 employees, n=552; 200+ employees, n=1,230; ANZSIC division, min 36 in each.

Fieldwork was conducted in May-June 2018.

This research report was prepared by Where to Research.

WHERE
TO

For more information and the full research report visit www.comcare.gov.au/collaborativepartnership

Research findings

AMONG EMPLOYERS WHO WERE SURVEYED

50%

are not confident in their businesses
ability to support people with a
physical or psychological disability or
health condition

53%


believe their **workplace culture** is not
supportive of people with a physical or
psychological disability or health condition

36%







believe their workplace has **low capacity**
to accommodate people with a physical or
psychological disability or health condition



Key barriers

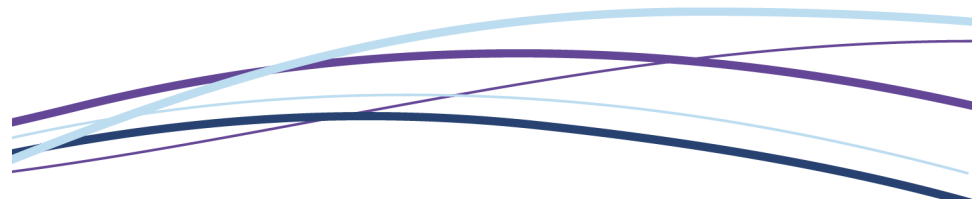
- Fear of the unknown – lack of experience in recruiting and managing
 - Lack of leadership – few strong voices for inclusion
 - Lack of skills and resources – jeopardising operations
 - Low levels of confidence – efficiency concerns
 - Liability and compliance mindset – causing injury or issues for other staff
 - Focus on disability – failing to see the individual as a whole
- 

The segmentation is best understood as a 'stages of change' model that indicates a path to greater engagement from 'Not A Priority' to 'Flexible Leader'

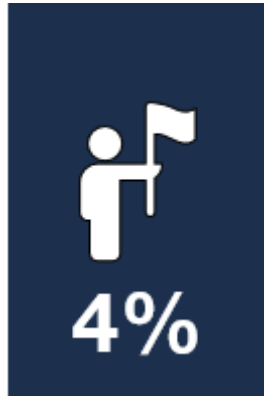
	Key characteristics	Barriers	Opportunities to progress
 4%	<p>Flexibility Leaders are significantly more likely to feel accommodating, eager hopeful, optimistic and unfazed</p> <p>They practice strategic flexibility in structuring the workplace and roles, and see the whole person when hiring</p>	<p>Some positions do not allow much flexibility</p> <p>Limited financial means to invest in workplace reconfiguration</p>	<p>Build on experience and encourage/help them tackle issues</p> <p>Encourage the formalisation of policies</p>
 18%	<p>Stumble Before Run are more likely to have had experience with hiring people with disability, but encountered issues or hurdles while doing so</p> <p>They are passive when it comes to recruiting and supporting people with disability and health conditions, despite having suitable roles</p>	<p>Physical incapability—rough worksites, no lifts</p> <p>Fear of the unknown</p> <p>Have experience at organisational—not necessarily at individual—level</p> <p>Tend to see the disability rather than the person</p>	<p>Build on experience and encourage/help them tackle issues</p> <p>Encourage the formalisation of policies</p>
 8%	<p>Building Momentum have had difficulty filling positions, which has increased willingness to look outside the box to find and keep the right people</p> <p>They are open to supporting people with health conditions and disabilities, but expect employees to fit into the company</p>	<p>Limited ability to adapt the environment or work process to suit individual employees</p> <p>Environmental constraints</p> <p>Concerns that people with pre-existing injuries are a liability</p> <p>Lack support of senior management</p>	<p>Help build capacity</p> <p>Encourage development of formal policies and initiatives</p> <p>Model and share success stories</p>
 12%	<p>Starting The Path are interested and alert to the idea of change and acknowledge their organisations are resistant to change</p>	<p>No suitable jobs</p> <p>Lack of leadership and resourcing</p> <p>Physical incapability</p> <p>Fear of the unknown</p>	<p>Inform about available supports</p> <p>Link to services and like-minded businesses</p>
 17%	<p>Curious and Looking For Direction are more likely to suggest their company's aim is 'compliance'</p> <p>They have little insight or interest in pursuing available support</p>	<p>'Red tape' hurdles with worksite compliance</p> <p>Risk management relating to both hiring and injury</p> <p>Physical incapability</p>	<p>Sell benefits and provide incentives to spark engagement</p> <p>Share case studies of similar organisations</p>
 41%	<p>Not A Priority feel it is important that they accommodate temporary physical (39%) and psychological (34%) conditions. This proportion decreased for permanent conditions (22%, 17%)</p>	<p>Belief that people with a disability or health condition pose a risk</p> <p>Lack of support from management</p> <p>Lack of flexibility and budget to modify workplace; A focus on 'bare minimum' compliance</p>	<p>Need direct support and encouragement to begin journey</p> <p>Provide templated policies and procedures</p> <p>Use of compliance/regulations to enforce engagement</p>

Six employer segments

- Flexibility leaders
- Stumble before run
- Building momentum
- Starting the path
- Curious and looking for direction
- Not a priority

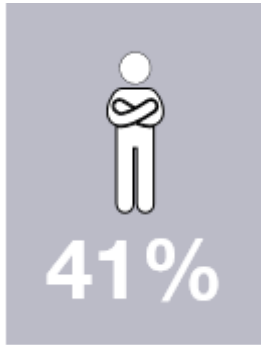


Flexibility Leaders




- Significantly more likely to feel accommodating, eager, hopeful, optimistic and unfazed
- View workforce through the lens of possibilities and solutions
- View each employee as a package of characteristics, disability is just one characteristic
- They take an investment approach to developing their whole workforce

Not a priority




- Not open to idea of employing people with disability or health condition
- Belief that people with disability posed a risk to themselves or others
- Lack of interest
- Wary of hiring someone that may require additional support, supervision or time to complete their job

Employer beliefs and experiences

- 68% agreed that work brings a lot to people's lives
 - 59% agreed it is the mark of a healthy society that everyone who want a job can get one
 - 49% agreed that it's hard to have a high quality life without work
 - Only 1 in 5 were able unprompted to outline the specific advantages and benefits of employing someone with a health condition/disability
- 

Opportunities

- Seeing the person as a whole
 - Recruiting staff who offer good fit for the organisation
 - Focussing on total work health of employees
 - Making the most of employees' different abilities
 - Recognising that talent comes in all shapes and sizes
 - Going beyond minimum compliance
- 



EMPLOYER MOBILISATION RESEARCH

Understanding behaviours, attitudes and intentions of employers in Australia towards recruiting, supporting and accommodating people with health conditions or disabilities

December 2018

- Workforce participation for working age Australians with a temporary or permanent physical or mental health condition has remained the same since 2003
- Employers play an important role in improving work participation rates for people with a health condition or disability yet may not have the resources, capability or willingness to provide good work
- This study was undertaken to better understand the barriers for employers with the aim of supporting employers to provide work opportunities for people with a health condition and retaining in the workforce

The research involved a survey of 2,457 people involved in hiring and management of staff and/or development of staff policies and initiatives, which resulted in key employer insights. This was followed by a further 56 in-depth interviews to gain rich insight into each segment on their experiences, practices and perceptions of organisational openness, confidence and capacity to support people with a health condition or disability.

Sample breakdown: Private sector, n=1,441; Public sector, n=1,096; 1-19 employees, n=699; 20-99 employees, n=682; 100+ employees, n=1,250. ANZSIC division, min 50 in each

Fieldwork was conducted in May-June 2018

This research report was prepared by Where to Research

WHERE
TO

For more information and the full research report visit www.comcare.gov.au/collaborativepartnership

www.comcare.gov.au/collaborativepartnership