



1



2



3

Vocational Recovery: What does it really represent?

WHY: Vocational Recovery is our worthy cause, our ideal, it's our infinite game, it's what drives us, it's our "Why"

HOW: Through a worker centric work disability prevention model supported in the law, administrative rules, appropriate administration of vocational services and partnerships

WHAT: Help Injured Workers Heal & Return to Work by making it easier for those who help us accomplish our goals

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

4

Return to Work Culture: Vision

Vocational Recovery Project

Create a culture focused on vocational recovery that engages all parties in preventing work disability while improving return-to-work outcomes.

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

5

Work Disability & Contributing Risk Factors

Why do some claims persist?

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

6

JARP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REHABILITATION PROFESSIONALS

Work Disability

Work disability occurs "when a worker is unable to stay at work or return to work because of an injury or disease. Work disability is the result of a **decision** by a worker who for potential physical, psychological, social, administrative, or cultural reasons does not return to work. While the worker may want to return to work, he or she **feels** incapable of returning to normal working life. Therefore, after the triggering accident or disease has activated a work absence, **various determinants** can influence some workers to remain temporarily out of the workplace, while others return, and others may finally not return to work at all."

*Handbook of Work Disability Prevention and Management –
Loisel and Anema 2013*

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

7

JARP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REHABILITATION PROFESSIONALS

Work Disability

"Not Surprisingly, return to work is often less dependent on the medical factors surrounding the actual injury than it is about the unique characteristics of an injured employee and his or her employer."

*How to Negotiate Return to Work
Melhorn MD, Rainville MD*

*AMA Guides to the Evaluation of Work Ability and Return to Work, Second Edition,
Talmage MD, Melhorn MD, Hyman MD 2011*

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

8

JARP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REHABILITATION PROFESSIONALS

Work Disability: A separate condition?

"...directly address the work disability problem as a central issue independent of the condition..."

*Handbook of Work Disability Prevention and Management –
Loisel and Anema 2013*

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

9

JARP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RECOVERING PERSONNEL PROFESSIONALS

Work Disability: A separate condition?

Worker Persona's

1. The Advocate
2. The Adversary
3. The Addled

Building a Better Recovering Worker – The Advocate, The Adversary and The Addled
Robert Wilson, Workercompensation.com

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

10

JARP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RECOVERING PERSONNEL PROFESSIONALS

Work Disability: Individual Risk Elements

- Low expectations of return to work
- Low perceived value of work
- High level of concerns about returning to work
- Unclear process, roles, and pathway(s) to return to work
- Fear & Avoidance

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

11

JARP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RECOVERING PERSONNEL PROFESSIONALS

Work Disability: Additional Contributing Risk Elements

Beyond the Individual

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

12

Bureaugenic Disability?

"Ambivalence and resistance should not be ignored, rewarded or punished, but recognized, understood and acted upon. An engaged employer or insurer can be the difference by being a guide that offers clear and consistent direction for mutual benefit. A disengaged employer or insurer will surely create Bureaugenic Disability, that is, unnecessary lost time created by competing or ambiguous return to work policies and practices."

Impaired, Disabled or Just Stuck? Managing Ambivalence and Resistance to Returning to Work* Kenneth Mitchell, Ph.D. WorkRx Group, Ltd. 2011

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

13

Impacts of Work Disability

"Only recently, the insight has grown and convincing evidence has been amassed that indicates that long-term work disability contributes to 2-3 times increased risk of poor general health, 2-3 times increased risk of mental health problems, and 20% excess mortality."

Laisei and Anema, Handbook of Work Disability Prevention and Management, 2013

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

14

Work Disability Prevention

The 4 principles of work disability prevention:

1. Prevent unnecessary delays
2. Prevent a confusing process
3. Prevent unnecessary duration
4. Prevent unclear RTW expectations/plans

By permission of Centrix Disability Management Services Inc., 2005-2019

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

15

Work Disability Prevention

"In fact, the goal of work disability prevention and management is not to fix a disorder or take care of an illness. It is identifying and effectively addressing the determinants of work disability at the personal (physical and psychological), workplace, and societal levels through evidence-based interventions."

Loisel and Anema, Handbook of Work Disability Prevention and Management, 2013

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

16

3 Types of Work Absence

- ✓ Medically Necessary
- ✓ Medically Discretionary
- ✓ Medically Unnecessary

"1.) Increase awareness of How Rarely Disability is Medically Required"

Preventing Needless Work Disability by Helping People Stay Employed, American College Of Occupational And Environment Medicine, 2006

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

17

Work Disability Prevention: Let's be clear!

- Risk
- Capacity
- Tolerance

AMA Guides to the Evaluation of Work Ability and Return to Work, Second Edition 2011

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

18

Work Disability Prevention: The Best Practice

A Worker Centric Approach!

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

19

Worker Centric Means We...

put the worker in the lead role and make it easy for them to choose to return to work

are engaging and activating workers based on what they think needs to happen through goal planning and attainment to enable them to successfully return to work or progress through the process

develop relationships and trust with workers to help them identify their motivations, concerns, and risks with returning to work

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

20

Worker Centric

Preventing Needless Work Disability by Helping People Stay Employed, American College Of Occupational And Environment Medicine, 2006

Table 1 - The Stay at Work/Return to Work Process Escalation Levels

The process begins when a precipitating event, usually health-related, raises the question whether a worker can/should remain at work.

Escalation Level	Who is involved?	How is current work capacity determined?	How are job demands determined (both usual job and alternatives)?	What triggers the actual return to work?
0	Worker Worker and Supervisor	Personal knowledge Discussion	Personal knowledge Discussion	Personal decision Discussion
1	Worker and Physician	Discussion RTW note from physician	Verbal description of usual job Discussion	Discussion
2	Worker Physician Claims adjuster/case manager	Formal inquiry Simple physical capabilities form completed by MD	List of job's functional demands Discussion	Discussion
3	Worker Physician Claims adjuster/case manager Physical therapist Ergonomist or vocational consultant IME examiner Union steward Lawyer	Diagnostic testing Functional capacity evaluation Independent medical opinion	Video of job Ergonomic analysis of job On-site workplace visit	Written offer of employment Formal return to work plan Sign-off by all parties

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

21

Work Disability Prevention

Does it work?

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

22

DASHBOARD SUMMARY

Measure	Change from 2012 (unless otherwise noted)	Highlights
Long Term Disability - share that received a TL payment in the 12 month post injury	Down 25.5%	Lowest since 2002
Estimated Ultimate Pensions 2004 - 2016	Down 23% (From 2012 Estimates)	
Resolution rate - time-loss claims at 6 months	Up 1.5%	
Auto adjudication of claims	Up 84.9% from 2014	Highest since 2002*
High risk claims - share return to work at 12 months	Up 9.0%	
Median time-loss days paid at first vocational service	Down 70%	Lowest since 2002*
% RTW outcomes - all first vocational service referrals	Up 173%	
WSAW participation	Steady utilization	
COHE utilization	Up 78.3%	

* Earliest year for which measurement is available

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

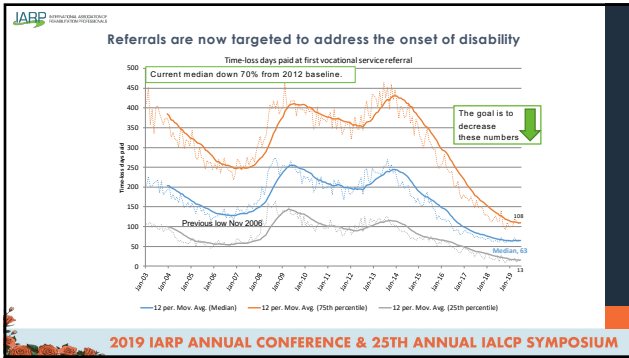
23

Long term disability percent

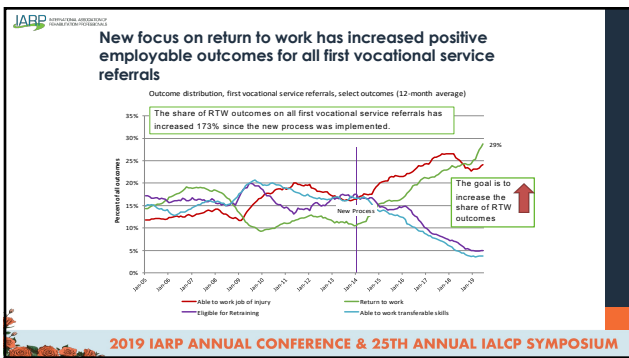
Share of injured workers with time-loss paid in the 12th month post injury: smaller percentage indicates less long-term disability

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

24



25



26

Building the Case for Vocational Recovery

The most significant method of keeping time-loss benefits from growing to lengthy levels is through the vocational rehabilitation program.

Early and aggressive intervention by skilled VR professionals has great potential to reduce time-loss and improve return to work for injured workers.

Washington State Pension System Review, W.E. Upjohn Institute, 2008

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

27

JARP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REHABILITATION PROFESSIONALS

Building the Case for Vocational Recovery

"Early intervention by the physician and a rehabilitation counselor after injury can facilitate a positive attitude and empower the worker to resist the negative effect of the system reinforcers that discourage early return to work."

Mundy, RR, SC Moore, JB Corey, GD Mundy. *Disability Syndrome: The Effects of Early Vs. Delayed Rehabilitation Intervention*. AAOHN J., 1994

AMA *Guides to the Evaluation of Work Ability and Return to Work, Second Edition*. Talmage MD, Melhorn MD, Hyman MD 2011

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

28

JARP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REHABILITATION PROFESSIONALS

Building the Case for Vocational Recovery: JLARC Audit Recommendation

Implement RTW standard practices:
 "Some vocational service practices need to be tailored to be more effectively utilized in appropriate claims. For example, the AWA is being used as an "adjudicative" tool, but the adjudicative approach is not an effective RTW tool. New practices and interventions need to be defined and put into use, which can become part of a standard RTW practice used to manage claims towards desired outcomes...."

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

29

JARP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REHABILITATION PROFESSIONALS


The Vocational Recovery Project

Objectives:

1. Identify best practices that support worker engagement and return to work focus
2. Educate all relevant parties on best practices
3. Create supplier partnerships that are collaborative, transparent, support innovation, and improve service quality

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

30




The Vocational Recovery Project

- Vocational Recovery Referral Pilot Project**
Focus on helping workers return to work by creating a vocational recovery plan. VRCs and L&I claim managers in the pilot are testing emerging best practices with the goal of preventing work disability.
- Best Practices**
Scouting the world for evidence-based best practices for decreasing work disability and increasing return-to-work outcomes. Reading, analysis and discussion are quickly moving the group toward a new way of doing voc.
- Education and Training**
Developing educational content that will foster the worker-centric model of worker engagement with VRCs as well as with L&I's claim managers and vocational services specialists. In addition to live training, we are creating online learning resources.
- Firm and VRC Registration and Requirements**
Improve the registration process to maintain a pool of experienced VRCs who engage workers in return-to-work efforts and consistently provide quality vocational services.
- Referral Process**
Design an impartial, consistent vocational referral model, promoting appropriate and effective outcomes, and recognizing and encouraging quality work.
- Complaint Process Escalations and De-escalations**
Develop better ways to identify inconsistencies with quality vocational work and improve escalation strategies to educate and mentor VRCs.

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

31




Identifying Best Practices

- Best Practices are being identified through a search of available scholarly literature
- Search is restricted to research published in the last 10 years that focused on non-medical interventions
- More than 80 articles and collections have been identified to date
 - Most frequently cited publications can be found in the "Handbook of Return to Work", edited by Izabela Z. Shultz and Robert J. Gatchel, 2016
 - "Handbook of Work Disability Prevention and Management", edited by Patrick Loisel and Johannes R. Anema, 2013

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

32




Success Stories

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

33

VOCATIONAL RECOVERY: HELPING WORKERS HEAL, RECOVER AND RETURN TO WORK.
 The Magical Result of Collaboration in WA State = Meeting IARP's Goals!

A VRC's Perspective:
 Sandra Holman Thomas, MA, CRC, CDMS, PGAP
 Past President, WA IARP



2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

34

Vocational Recovery Project in WA State – Meeting IARP's Goals!

- Collaborative partnership with the WA State Department of Labor and Industries and private sector VRCs to improve vocational rehabilitation services for a worker centric/return to work activation approach.
- IARP's Goal #4: Establish and maintain effective relationships with external organization and institutions.
- Started in February 2014 with 30 VRCs and 30 CMs to test best practices for a worker centric/return to work activation approach to claims.
- Ongoing educational groups and advisory groups to oversee the project and amend as needed.

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

35

Difference between VR vs. AWA

<p><u>Vocational Recovery (VR)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal paperwork Multiple meetings Developing a Vocational Recovery/RTW Plan Education re: RTW Programs – FW and SAW Providing resume and job search services Collaborative process with worker, employer and doctor ENGAGEMENT (Worker, employer and doctor) "I am here to help you through your medical and vocational recovery, and want to help you plan for your return to work when medically ready." 	<p><u>Assessment Model (AWA)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A lot of paperwork One meeting Employable or Eligible for retraining Assessment of skills Developing job analyses Performing LMS Writing a closure report "I will be assessing your atw for all of your work hx/vsa positions."
---	--

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

36

JARP WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION
FOR REHABILITATION

Working while Recovering:


The importance of the VRC's role in the worker and doctor engagement

Debunking the myth that a worker needs to be medically fixed to work.

Identifying return to work options including light duty, part-time work, gradual return to work, trial of work, ergonomics solutions while the worker is recovering.

Engagement with the worker and employer to identify work options. Utilizing WA State's SAW and PW programs for return to work options.

Bringing the work solutions to the doctor for review vs. sending job analyses via fax



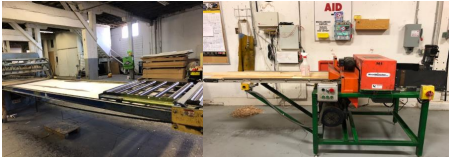
2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

37

JARP WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION
FOR REHABILITATION

Case examples:

- Long term Pepsi Worker. Hip injury.
- Warehouse Worker, Ergonomics. Part-time while receiving LEP/SAW for EOI. Meeting with AP to identify date for regular duty work start date. Worker RTW Full Duty.



2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

38

JARP WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION
FOR REHABILITATION

Intended Consequences of the VR Project	Unintended Consequences of the VR Project
Worker Centric approach encourages return to work	VRCs feel a new sense of energy in their careers as they are able to help and support workers in their medical and vocational recovery.
Employer savings	VRCs and CMs can support employer savings by providing enhanced services to workers and focusing on return to work solutions.
Higher return to work outcomes	Higher levels of worker satisfaction with services provided.
Increased communication between WA State L&I and private sector VRCs	Partnership for a common goal of helping a worker heal, recover and return to work – Meeting IARP's Goals!

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

39

JARP INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS
INVESTIGATION CORPORATION

System Supports & Solidifying the Future

- **Cultural Shift: Vocational Recovery vs. Employability Determinations**
- **RCW 51.32.095: Broad language enables, in a general way, everything we are trying to do to promote vocational recovery**
 - focus on enabling and returning to gainful employment vs. solely employability assessment
 - does not require medical treatment to be concluded
 - broad latitude to pay for services necessary for return to work
- **New Rules**
 - Vocational Recovery Referrals

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

40

JARP INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS
INVESTIGATION CORPORATION

The Law

RCW 51.32.095

(1) One of the primary purposes of this title is to enable the injured worker to become employable at gainful employment. To this end, the department or self-insurers must utilize the services of individuals and organizations, public or private, whose experience, training, and interests in vocational rehabilitation and retraining qualify them to lend expert assistance to the supervisor of industrial insurance in such programs of vocational rehabilitation as may be reasonable to make the worker employable consistent with his or her physical and mental status. Where, after evaluation and recommendation by such individuals or organizations and prior to final evaluation of the worker's permanent disability and in the sole opinion of the supervisor or supervisor's designee, whether or not medical treatment has been concluded, vocational rehabilitation is both necessary and likely to enable the injured worker to become employable at gainful employment

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

41

JARP INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS
INVESTIGATION CORPORATION

The Law

RCW 51.32.095

(2) Vocational rehabilitation services may be provided to an injured worker when in the sole discretion of the supervisor or the supervisor's designee vocational rehabilitation is both necessary and likely to make the worker employable at gainful employment. In determining whether to provide vocational services and at what level, the following list must be used, in order of priority with the highest priority given to returning a worker to employment:

- (a) Return to the previous job with the same employer;
- (b) Modification of the previous job with the same employer including transitional return to work;
- (c) A new job with the same employer in keeping with any limitations or restrictions;
- (d) Modification of a new job with the same employer including transitional return to work;
- (e) Modification of the previous job with a new employer;
- (f) A new job with a new employer or self-employment based upon transferable skills;
- (g) Modification of a new job with a new employer;
- (h) A new job with a new employer or self-employment involving on-the-job training;
- (i) Short-term retraining.

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

42

The Law

RCW 51.32.095

(4) To encourage the employment of individuals who have suffered an injury or occupational disease resulting in permanent disability which may be a substantial obstacle to employment, the supervisor or supervisor's designee, in his or her sole discretion, may provide assistance including job placement services for eligible injured workers who are receiving vocational services under the return-to-work priorities listed in subsection (2)(b) through (f) of this section, except for self-employment, and to employers that employ them.

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

43

New Rules!

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

44

Key Takeaways

1. Start with Why – build a movement, build a culture
2. Address work disability as a separate condition and familiarize yourself with the contributing factors!!!
3. A worker centric approach is the best practice
4. Work disability prevention works!
5. 3 Kinds of work absence: medically necessary, medically discretionary, medically unnecessary
6. Be mindful of the language you use while addressing workability: risk, capacity, tolerance
7. Addressing the work disability problem can prevent human suffering while saving unnecessary costs to carriers

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM

45

IARP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS



THANK YOU! QUESTIONS?

2019 IARP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & 25TH ANNUAL IALCP SYMPOSIUM
