

Together

Spring 2017

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and community

Committed to the
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Every year more than 5.1 million Australians participate in organised sport and physical activity as players, officials or in non-playing but active support roles.

It is no surprise then that many sporting clubs are working at a community level to promote healthy living and chronic disease prevention to the greatest number of people in need. In this issue, you can find out more about our Mutual's support of a number of grassroots community initiatives which, through sport, are helping people adopt a healthier lifestyle and outlook on life.

We also continue to focus on raising awareness on positive mental health in the workplace. As a key contributor to a series of online educational videos created by EML and The Shannon Company, Doctor Peter Cotton shares his



insight with members into mental injury and how employers can support their staff.

As a renowned clinical and organisational psychologist specialising in how organisational environments influence employee mental health and wellbeing outcomes, Doctor Cotton was a

driving force behind our (Mis)behave with Dave series. The six part series takes a humorous approach to help employers and workers start a conversation to mitigate the impact of psychological illness.

Bill O'Reilly
Chairman

QUOTING AUSTRALIAN COMEDIAN DAVE O'NEILL WHO FEATURES IN THE SERIES, 'WE ALL DESERVE TO BE HAPPY AND HEALTHY AT WORK'. THIS SENTIMENT RUNS TRUE HERE AT EML, AND WE HOPE THAT ALL OUR MEMBERS ARE INSPIRED TO ENCOURAGE THIS IN THEIR WORKPLACE.

Addressing workplace risk with online tools

Now more than ever, employers and their staff are looking towards new and innovative technology to make it easier to manage their WHS, training and workers compensation online. Here we take a look at new features of EML's online member benefits.



NEW EMLEARNING COURSE FOR MEMBERS AND THEIR STAFF

We have upgraded EMlearning to a new, easy to use interface in August 2017.

As part of this major upgrade, we are also working to provide new features such as course adaptics. The adaptics technology dynamically adapts training materials for each individual. Learners can apply their existing experience and knowledge to streamline their learning and focus only on areas where knowledge gaps have been identified.

The existing courses that we offer will also be updated as part of this upgrade. We offer a total of 17 free courses, four of which are specifically tailored to managers and supervisors while 13 courses are generic to all employees. EMlearning members also get a discount to the online learning store which has a range of courses on topics such as emergency procedures, health and aged care and first aid.

Access to the new three part online return to work coordinator course will be launched in the coming months.



EMSAFE

EMSAFE – NOW EVEN EASIER TO USE

We have developed and tested a new functional job description module on EMSafe rolled out to all users in August. It aims to make the process of creating functional job descriptions easier. Functional job descriptions provide detailed information about the functional requirements and skills of a specific role within the workplace.

They can help you to:

- understand the functional requirements of each role to assist with accurate pre-employment testing when recruiting new employees
- assist in the identification of suitable duties when an employee is injured, and
- assist treating doctors to understand what a role requires when signing off pre-injury duties.

For further information, please contact the member benefits team at memberbenefits@eml.com.au



Supporting mental wellbeing in the workplace

Around 20% of employees will experience a mental health issue, and this can have an enormous impact on their professional and personal life.

EML is taking an engaging look at workplace culture and what employers can do to reduce the risk of mental injury among employees.



Workplace Risk Expert, Dr Peter Cotton

According to Dr Peter Cotton, a clinical and organisational psychologist specialising in how work environments influence employee mental health, wellbeing and behaviours, there are a myriad of instances in the workplace where it becomes apparent, in retrospect, that major issues could have been resolved had they been addressed earlier.

Q: What are the current trends in research around work related psychological or mental injury?

A: The numbers of psychological or mental injury seem to be increasing across most jurisdictions. It's a challenging space because the outcomes haven't improved greatly in recent years.

It's also complex because we have the impact of mental health programs such as Beyond Blue, which means there's a lot of awareness about mental health issues now, so it's hard to know if there are more people coming forward or if the incidence of mental injury is actually increasing.

Q: What are some examples of things that can contribute to mental injury?

A: There's occupational violence (that includes alcohol or drug-fuelled violence targeted at hospital staff in emergency departments or emergency workers), interpersonal conflict, bullying and performance management. Other risk factors include laissez-faire leadership and this is where managers tend to focus on technical job content rather than on people skills. For example, a nurse who has both clinical and leadership responsibilities may tend to focus on the technical aspects of the work if they're in a stressful environment.

The tolerance levels for incivility (e.g. inappropriate low intensity behaviour, interrupting, sarcasm) and poor behaviour is also something that can contribute to mental injury. Staff cliques, excess work demands, poor quality performance management processes and perceived low workplace support all can impact on an employee's mental health.

Q: What are some of the early warning signs of mental injury?

A: There are a number of generic early warning signs, for example, increased unplanned leave. If someone starts withdrawing and taking time off, that should always be a trigger to initiate a conversation and try to determine whether something in the workplace is affecting that person or if it's more a non-work related illness or issue.

If people change the way they are behaving in the workplace, if they exhibit disproportionate emotional responses to situations, are grumpier, upset or get fired up about issues that seem unwarranted, then that's a trigger for managers to initiate a supportive conversation.

Q: What is a supportive conversation? What might that look like?

A: It's where a manager initiates a conversation with an employee who doesn't seem to be their usual self. There may be some early warning signs that prompt managers to have this conversation. These supportive conversations are best framed as a straightforward check in. You might say, "You don't seem your usual self. I've noticed XYZ, can we have a chat about it?" rather than "I think you have a mental health disorder."

This is really about managers and employers responding as a people leader. No one is expecting a manager to become a diagnostician or counsellor. It's about supporting people and trying to get access to relevant services for employees as early as possible. The outcome may be as simple as the person agreeing to go to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or their family doctor.

Q: What are some of the barriers for managers in starting that conversation?

A: We still get a lot of avoidance behaviour in the workplace. Often managers may be scared to talk to employees because they are worried they will open Pandora's box or they may not think it's their role. There's a real lack of clarity around this. As a people leader it's absolutely appropriate to initiate a straightforward, supportive conversation. If someone has personal difficulties at home and they're not getting much sleep, maybe different duties need to be looked at, or tweaking their starting and ending times to accommodate them. Managers need to be open enough to initiate that conversation and then either refer employees onto an external support person or to explore how the work may be managed differently for them.

Q: What does a psychologically healthy workspace look like?

A: A mentally healthy workplace is about validating early help seeking behaviour. We want people to feel comfortable that they can access assistance and help and won't be treated differently. A practical example is that good managers in team meetings will promote wellbeing. They might say, "Wellbeing is an

important part of the way we do our work so if anyone's struggling come and chat to me." Then they might also have a bit of discussion and reflection about how the team is travelling.

We know that when people believe that wellbeing is on the radar or that managers value people's wellbeing, employees are more likely to come forward early, and you're least likely to get resistance if you decide to initiate a supportive conversation.

Q: Is it crucial for wellbeing to become part of on-going work conversations and meetings?

A: Yes, it's got to be integrated in the day-to-day way the organisation does business, and people know that if something happens or they're struggling, they can go to the manager confidently, and they'll be appropriately supported and steered in the right direction. People make judgments about how genuine a manager is and if the manager's reading from a script and saying in a rote way "wellbeing is important", then workers don't perceive that it's genuine. But if employees believe managers value wellbeing because of having conversations over time and they see things happening, then that builds the confidence in the team environment.

Everyone shares the responsibility for mental health in the workplace. Starting the conversation is the best thing you can do.



Together with The Shannon Company, EML has created a series of videos which take an engaging look at workplace culture and what employers and workers can do to reduce the risk of mental injury.

EML's (mis)behave with Dave is a six-part video series starring comedian Dave O'Neil along with workplace mental health expert Dr Peter Cotton. The videos aim to improve mental health in the workplace by educating employers and workers about how to promote psychological wellbeing in the workplace, and prevent illness from occurring in the first place.

Set at the fictitious Inappropriate Corporation, the short videos use humour in an attempt to break down the barriers to discussing mental health, driving the message home to employers and employees, across all industries.

EML CEO Mark Coyne, said that the videos represent an engaging partnership between humour and expertise to deliver a serious message effectively.

"Dave O'Neil is a well-known comedian who people want to watch. By using his skills to open the door to serious subject matter, it helps remove the stigma and get the message through," he said.

"As a mutual organisation, EML reinvests some profits to fund programs that support employer members to create safer workplaces. PWC research commissioned by Beyond Blue found that the average ROI from investment in mental health initiatives in the workplace is \$2.30 for every \$1 invested.

"Employers can use the videos as education and training material, and a way to get the conversation started about mental wellbeing at their workplace," Mr Coyne said.

The videos address issues such as bullying, mental health stigma and incivility in the workplace, featuring practical tips employers can apply. There are checklists for each topic, so employers can rate their workplace and create an action plan for change.

For more information or to view the series visit eml.com.au/misbehavewithdave

MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

Psychological injury in the workplace can be challenging, but supporting employees' mental health is easier than you think.

As a key contributor to a series of online educational videos created by EML to encourage the early identification of factors contributing to psychological injuries in workplaces, Dr Cotton sat down with Dr Lindy Alexander and shares his insights into mental injury and what employers can do to support their staff.

There's something about mental injury that can make us deeply uncomfortable. Psychological injury is

about damage that can't necessarily be seen, so it can be difficult to know exactly how to prevent it and how to respond when it does occur.

But with 20% of employees experiencing a mental health issue, and untreated mental health conditions costing Australian employers more than \$10 billion every year, it is crucial that employers know the best way to handle situations involving psychological injury.



Steve McCullagh
Head of Recon
Clinical Services,
NSW Police Force

Since 2015, NSW Police has lead RECON – a unique program purposefully designed to provide targeted, individualised treatment and preventative interventions to NSW Police Officers with a physical or psychological injury.

RECON also offers to programs to minimise risk of physical or psychological ill-health.

The RECON program is in joint partnership with EML and icare, and co-funded by EML's Member Benefits has been hailed a success by the police officers that it aims to help.

“The vision is to apply a gold standard level of diagnosis, treatment and outcome driven management whilst maintaining an empathetic, holistic, high performance environment.”

Speaking about the program, Steve McCullagh Head of Recon Clinical Services NSW Police Force outlined the program's unique vision – to apply a gold standard level of diagnosis, treatment and outcome driven management whilst maintaining an empathetic, holistic, high performance environment.

“Police work is inherently physical and officers are expected to participate in a range of physically challenging activities,” Steve said.

“When faced with the uncertainty of the day ahead it can be difficult to return an officer to work when those treating them are using passive techniques.”

Previously, trialled a small but successful program at their own headquarters, using a sports physiotherapist, followed by a strength and conditioning coach.

This style of treatment was active, outcome focused and aimed to return the officer to work fitter than they were before the injury.



“We saw enormous opportunity with this approach and decided it would be worthwhile investing funding in the scale-up of this program to allow more officers to participate,” says EML Member Benefits Coordinator Kirsty Smith.

The 12-week program works by offering officers the opportunity to attend a RECON facility in their area.

They'll attend a physio session at the dedicated state-of-the-art site, followed by a strength and conditioning session in the gym.

Officers then meet with a psychologist to discuss coping strategies, sleep and other lifestyle factors that can help their recovery. A dietician is also on hand to assist them with healthy food habits. ■

In April 2017, Channel Nine's A Current Affair program featured the RECON program, speaking to officers.

Senior Constable Mark Sanchez took part in the RECON program and says it's an invaluable tool for officers like him, who are out on the frontline.

“At the end of the day, it's what I enjoy doing. But they never really show you this in the brochures or the academy or anything like that ... they never tell you that 90 per cent of the time you are going to be talking to people and it's going to be the worst day of their lives, or one of the worst days.”

Senior Constable Sanchez told ACA the daily grind of negative experiences can weigh heavily.

“Every 12-hour shift that you do, you are surrounded by people on the worst day of their life telling you their story and then what happens is you stop seeing the positives in anything, you are just surrounded by the negatives,” he said.

RECON offers a holistic approach to combating physical and psychological impacts of on-the-job injuries and outcomes.

“It's a one-stop shop,” said NSW Assistant Commissioner Carlene York.

“Our aim is not to lose anyone to psychological or physical ill health,” Ma'am York said.

To view the full story visit <http://www.9news.com.au>

A FORCE TO BE RECON-ED WITH

On the surface, it appears to be just another average warehouse. But beyond its humble facade in Sydney's west, lies a state of the art training facility, whose in-house physiotherapists, psychologists, dietitians and reconditioning coaches are helping injured officers recover and maintain active duty.



A unique partnership showcasing the issues impacting business and job creation in regional SA.

Phil Foreman, Port Lincoln Chamber of Commerce with Alex Flint in Port Lincoln, SA – June 2017

EML COMMITS TO THE REGIONS

As part of its overall commitment to regional business, EML teamed up with Business SA to unveil a unique insight into the issues impacting business development and job creation in regional South Australia.

Small Business Commissioner, John Chapman with Alex Flint



The inaugural study culminated in a publication titled, *The Regional Voice*, which outlined the results.

The first study of its kind, the project involved a two-stage survey of EML members and regional Chamber members to identify the barriers they faced on a daily basis when trying to run a successful business.

EML Regional Development Manager **Alex Flint** personally met with regional chambers of commerce to ascertain first hand the challenges faced and collect data to help create potential Member Benefits initiatives in the future.

“Through its Member Benefits, EML is sponsoring Business SA Regional Voice Events to support regional businesses and to get a better understanding of the issues they face and how regional businesses can better engage with EML,” says Mr Flint.

“EML has made a commitment to enhance our regional engagement and this is the perfect platform to engage and deepen relationships with local businesses.”

Mr Flint says some of the issues identified included skills shortages, labour costs, taxes, energy costs, urban drifts and lack of leadership in the 18 - 34 age bracket, linked to urban drift.

“The study was extremely successful, the feedback was elaborate and the follow up events in each region was fantastic, with large numbers of businesses attending their local events to meet with Business SA and EML,” says Mr Flint.

“Business SA has tabled each region’s concerns in its regional Voice Report, using data to advocate on behalf of its members to create change in policy at a government level.”

The study is part of EML’s overall commitment to the regions via a range of avenues including face-to-face engagement with the community.

“Our mobile case managers service the remote and rural areas of South Australia,” says Mr Flint.

“No longer do our staff sit behind a desk supporting stakeholders. They are out in the regions supporting from the moment an injury takes place.”

MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH SEMINAR

Renowned documentary maker and advertising specialist **Todd Sampson** was one of several high-profile speakers at a ground-breaking mental health seminar, co-hosted by EML this year.

The Managing Mental Health Seminar was established through a collaboration between Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW) and EML that was consistent with the biopsychosocial approach used for all FRNSW claims. The purpose was to inform and educate the workforce on psycho-social issues, the impact of mental illness on the individual and the power of the mind in changing mental health and outlook. The seminar was designed to support some of society's most relied-upon employees – those forming the frontline through government agencies such as Fire & Rescue NSW, NSW Police Force, Rural Fire Service, the State Emergency Service and NSW Health.



Psychologist Professor Michael Sullivan

Commissioner John Feneley, Mental Health Commissioner of NSW

By the very nature of their roles, frontline agency employees are dedicated to the health and safety of the community. It's important work and at times, can be psychologically challenging - so it's crucial that the mental health and wellbeing of workers is taken care of.

Attendees heard first-hand from people living with mental health challenges and how those challenges impact their work life.

The seminar was jointly hosted by both EML and icare, providing 250 key agency employees with world's best techniques, support processes and resources to identify and help colleagues who may be having mental health issues.

Making the seminar unique was its fresh approach to mental health management in the workforce, moving away from the traditional method of clinicians simply relaying information. Instead the focus was on providing practical examples and tools to assist peers to support colleagues with mental health issues.

Sampson engaged attendees with his discussion about neuroplasticity of the brain and how we can retrain our minds to overcome challenges both physically and emotionally, while Canadian Psychologist Professor Sullivan talked about "Perceived Injustice" and how it contributes to a wide range of problematic outcomes following work-related injuries.

The seminar also covered issues of bullying, mental health stigma and incivility in the workplace, featuring practical tips employers can apply to develop resilience.

"As a claims manager our work is to help people get their lives back after injury," said EML CEO Mark Coyne.

"The hope with the seminar is that by arming peers with techniques to support their colleagues, mental health issues will be identified earlier, and appropriate care and support can be provided." ■



Kicking goals for health and the community

Footy final season is here, and while loyal followers are flocking to their local fields and sporting grounds to cheer on their teams, EML is also getting behind a number of sporting initiatives.

SUPPORTING THE MEN OF THE WEST

Supporting the health and wellbeing of at-risk men the Western Bulldogs' Sons of the West program is a unique community development program promoting behaviour change with a sport.

Through its Australian Football Rules focus, the program has been able to attract a hard-to-reach demographic of men, living and working in Victoria's western region.

Offering 16 locations across Victoria's west, the free program is being run in conjunction with six local councils and multiple community health services.

"The program bases itself on the premise that trustworthy and socially inclusive learning environments empower men to take action to manage their health and wellbeing," says Sons of the West Program Coordinator David Pickering Gurner.

The calendar year is comprised of three 10 week long education and exercise programs that focus on physical and mental health.

Each week participants attend 60 minutes of informal education focusing on physical and mental health.

Brenton Cook – EML Human Resources Specialist and Kirsty Smith EML Member Benefits Coordinator at August 2017 Sons of the West graduation

We are proud that our people and the mutual can help support this amazing community program



The information is delivered through a range of community and national health services, ensuring all information is evidence based and best practice.

Following the learning block, participants take part in an hour of fun, supported group-based physical activity, supervised by exercise physiologists, provisional psychologists and a wealth of multi-disciplinary students.

"The program acts as a touch point for a number of individuals wanting, and willing, to get their health back on track," says David.

"Therefore, to ensure participants receive a high level of care, we have set up localised referral pathways with surrounding community health services."

The program incorporates both peer education and behaviour change models; demonstrating the importance of peer led intervention strategies, whilst also recognising the differing stages of individual development.

As cooperative partners of the program, EML health specialists have been volunteering during sessions.

"We are so fortunate to have a partnership with the Western Bulldogs, says Marketing Manager Kerren Turcato. "Not only do we share the same values of helping and giving back that guide our business, but it's allowing our people through community volunteering to extend the amazing work they do helping people get their lives back further."

We are proud that our people and the mutual can help support this amazing community program," said Kerren.

Since launching in 2013, more than 800 men have taken part in the program each week, with an impressive 82% retention rate.

Participants have reported improved health literacy, increased sustained physical activity and improved engagement with local primary health services.

More than 97% said they believed attending the program had motivated them to take more control of their own health and almost 90% said the program helped them to feel like part of the community.

For more information visit sonsofthewest.org.au



Jake Edwards, ex- Carlton AFL player and founder of Outside the Locker Room

NEW GAME CHANGER PROGRAM TO SUPPORT RIVERLAND COMMUNITY

A new community program is supporting young adults in rural South Australia become the next generation of community leaders.

For many Aussie kids, growing up in rural communities provides a number of unique lifestyle benefits. But just like their city counterparts, community leaders are having to step up efforts to address key social issues impacting today's youth.

Launched in May 2017, The Game Changer is assisting communities in South Australia's Riverland district lead the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse, whilst also raising awareness around family violence, mental health and suicide.

With sporting clubs the heart and soul of regional communities, the initiative is working in partnership with 20 football and netball clubs across the district to directly engage with young people who are at high risk.

Funded by EML and with support from Outside the Locker Room, TAFE SA, SANFL and Regional Development Australia (Murraylands and Riverland), the initiative encourages clubs to nominate potential leaders and the opportunity to complete a Certificate IV in Leadership and Management.

"From the outset we sought to engage with people and organisations across the Riverland to ensure the Game Changer program embraced a community response to the challenges facing young adults in the region," says Jared Simes, EML General Manager of SA Operations.

"Our partnership with TAFE SA gives participants a great opportunity to complete a Certificate IV in Leadership and Management and to help build tomorrow's community leaders.

"While the involvement of Outside the Locker Room brings a unique development program to tackle such topics as leadership, drugs and alcohol, family violence, mental health and suicide prevention," he says.

TAFE SA Regional Manager for the Riverland and Murraylands Julie Robertson says TAFE SA is delighted to be involved in a program that will have such a positive influence on the local community.

"We are really excited to be part of this new initiative and are looking forward to assisting

with the development of young leaders from across the region," Ms Robertson says.

It is envisaged that the young leaders who participate in the program will be upskilled as future mentors to provide support within their clubs and direct to their peers.

"Providing leadership and management education to these young adults will equip them with skills that will be able to be used across all aspects of their lives," Ms Robertson added.

"The TAFE SA course work will be designed to fit with the wider program and ensure it aligns with the local community's needs."

Speaking at the initiative's launch in May at the at Barmera-Monash Football Club, Jake Edwards, ex-Carlton AFL player and founder of Outside the Locker Room gave insight into his own battle with mental illness when he was growing up, and how this experience gave him the determination to ensure the next generation of rural leaders have more support.

You can listen to a series of Jake's podcasts.



Game Changer Participants

WHY BUSINESS SHOULD SPONSOR A LOCAL SPORTING CLUB

Benefits of footy for employees

A 12 month study has highlighted the numerous benefits to individuals involved with community football teams regardless of age.

While football was shown to be an effective way of delivering health and safety campaign messages to young people, the study also demonstrated that people associated with a football club have a higher level of self-reported wellbeing at every age group compared to the rest of the population.

In fact, the self-reported mental health of people aged 18-24 involved in a football club is substantially higher than the general population.

Interestingly, the study showed that local footy helps people develop skills in public speaking, problem solving, decision-making, conflict resolution and dealing with people from diverse backgrounds.

So while listening to your team mate tell yet another story about his on-field prowess might grind your gears, the skills and connections they pick up as a result, will make them a more valuable member of the organisation.

Benefits to communities

A study by the Centre for Sport and Social Impact at La Trobe University in 2015 was commissioned by AFL Victoria to determine the social value of a "typical" community football club; specifically its social, health and community impact.

The study showed that the average community football club in Victoria makes an economic contribution of \$630,000. Clubs are large consumers within their own communities and support local businesses like hotels, butchers, restaurants, bakeries and local trades people. They also provide direct employment opportunities for local residents.

There's also a significant social return on investment. The study indicated that for every \$1 spent to run a club, there is at least \$4.40 return in social value in terms of increased social connectedness, wellbeing and mental health status, employment outcomes, personal development, physical health, civic pride and support of other community groups.

In fact, it doesn't matter where you live, how long or how often you are involved in a football club, or what role you have associated with a football to experience these benefits.

Not only is footy good for individuals, the Latrobe University study also demonstrated numerous benefits to the community and local organisations – a fact demonstrated through community engagement.

Football clubs have significant reach within the community, with every one player reaching 10 people in their community.

Furthermore, clubs actively engage with their communities, whether it be delivering a school holiday program, hosting fundraising events, supporting other local groups or encouraging socially disadvantaged community members to participate.

But while organisations which sponsor football clubs do directly benefit, the primary goal is to assist them in delivering community benefits, rather than for commercial gain, though this is fantastic from a reputational point of view.

So, grab your footy boots or a beanie and scarf, get out there and support your local team this footy season, you'll feel better for it.

FEATURE



CARING FOR CARERS

As Australia's population rapidly ages, the aged care industry faces a unique set of challenges in keeping its own ageing workforce safe.

Serving people with complex health or aged care needs, HammondCare is working together with EML to identify strategies to manage its ageing workforce.

HammondCare's situation, along with that of the aged care industry in general, is unique in that the vast majority of employees are older, and the work required is often strenuous.

With the decline in muscle strength, flexibility and capacity brought about by ageing, workers can be vulnerable in a functional workplace, such as aged care.

In 2015, HammondCare launched its Managing an Ageing Workforce project, partnering with EML, to help fund workplace audit and in-depth task analysis of the duties performed by employees.

"Our goal was to take a proactive approach to safety to help minimise workplace risk and injury for its employees," says Ms Walsh.

"Leveraging our in-house Riskman reporting system gave us the visibility we needed to review injuries and duties within the organisation, and the task analysis allowed us to identify areas of high injuries and certain practices of our workers.

"One example appearing early in the audit identified 'dangerous heavy equipment' in the laundry and kitchen at one of our facilities, and this was identified as a potential high risk.

"This is just one of several examples the audit identified across our facilities of equipment which didn't meet the specific needs of our employees, posing a major risk to their safety and wellbeing."

Subsequent to the project, HammondCare has introduced new Personal Protection Equipment to kitchen staff to help prevent burns, replaced heavy equipment to reduce the stress encountered through and provided safer equipment for the delivery of personal laundry.

With the majority of its employees aged 40 – 45 years, HammondCare's goal is to ensure that it maintains its high quality services, whilst also ensuring the care of its people.

"The role of a care worker is functionally and emotionally demanding," says Compensation Manager Debra Walsh.

"The consequences are varied. There is the potential pressure on our services if our workers are slowing down to complete tasks, or worse still tasks may be putting our older workers at higher risk of injury."

In fact, the aged care industry's ageing workforce has resulted in an employment category that experiences the highest number of injuries. There's also an increased likelihood of time off work due to injuries sustained.

"Our goal was to take a proactive approach to safety to help minimise workplace risk and injury for its employees."

"Feedback from teams who attended the training sessions and are using the equipment on a daily basis has been overwhelmingly positive," says Ms Walsh.

"From the series of safety cards which were developed to promote conscious safety, right through to the new ergonomic trolleys we use for the delivery of personal laundry to the rooms, we are actively re-enforcing that age should not be a barrier to people continuing to work in an industry they enjoy.

"It's a special person who dedicates their life to serving society's most vulnerable, and HammondCare wants to do everything it can to keep them safe and healthy in our workplace, so they can continue to do great work for our community."



Together with The Shannon Company, EML created a six-part series which takes an engaging look at workplace culture and what employers and workers can do to reduce the risk of mental injury.

Featuring comedian Dave O'Neil and organisational psychologist Dr Peter Cotton, this series provides employers and workers with a practical and accessible take on the issues that can lead to mental injury in the workplace.

The series was funded by EML Member Benefits. View the series at inappropriatecorp.com.au

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