

RESEARCH PROGRAM

Research Project Details	
Title	The Effectiveness of Motivational Interviewing (MI) as an Interventional Tool for Improving Return to Work Rates for Injured Workers with Musculoskeletal Disorders
Investigator(s)	Dr. Douglas Gross, University of Alberta
Funding Period	September 2014 – June 2017
Budget	\$79,731
Issue/Rationale	The majority (80 to 85 percent) of injured workers return to work (RTW) quickly and without complications; however, the remaining 15 to 20 percent experience long periods of work disability. Psychosocial factors, such as poor expectations of recovery, fear-avoidance, or maladaptive beliefs, often influence incapacity and chronic work disability. Additionally, work disability may be coupled with personal, emotional and/or work related issues that contribute to delays in RTW. Physical limitations coupled with psychosocial issues influencing worker behaviour are important factors that can delay RTW and ultimately increase the number of paid compensation days and the overall claims cost. Some interventions are available that target physical and psychosocial barriers to RTW such as multidisciplinary functional restoration programs and workplace-based interventions. However, workers often respond inconsistently to these types of treatments. Another promising technique that can be built into many existing rehabilitation approaches that to our knowledge has not been tested in injured workers is Motivational Interviewing (MI).
Objective(s)	The objective of this research is to examine the effectiveness of MI when it is integrated into occupational rehabilitation programs for non-job attached claimants who are off work due to sub-acute and chronic MSK disorders.
Anticipated Results/ Impact	From a clinical perspective, the identification of modifiable risk factors affective work disability, such as lack of motivation or ambivalence about RTW, could assist in establishing targeted interventions that can avert the development of chronic work disability. To our knowledge, this is the first study to evaluate MI as an intervention for injured workers aimed at addressing behavioural and psychosocial components of MSK disorders. It will provide useful information related to injured workers' perspectives regarding RTW barriers and the utility of MI as an interventional tool for overcoming barriers. Study results will impact policy and treatment delivery in work rehabilitation at Millard Health and more broadly at other work rehabilitation treatment programs provincially, nationally, and internationally.
Keywords	Motivational Interviewing, randomized controlled trail, psychosocial factors, rehabilitation, return to work