

CHG NEWS

An educational newsletter about Occupational Health and Return to Work in South Australia.

This month ... we will look at workplace illness prevention through workplace vaccinations, as well as a Permanent Impairment Assessment (PIA) and its purpose. We hope you enjoy CHG News.

Workplace Vaccinations

Over the last 15 years infectious disease claim costs have near tripled. In 2016, Australian workplaces experienced 225 infectious disease claims costing \$1.3 million (Safe Work Australia 2018). This was the largest increase in claim costs for any type of work injury, highlighting the need for workplace vaccinations.

A vaccine is a serum which contains a dead or weakened version of an infectious germ (bacteria or virus). Injecting the vaccine into a person stimulates that person's immune system to develop antibodies to destroy that germ without making the person sick. Your body's immune system remembers each disease you have ever fought. By being vaccinated, if you were to catch the 'real' germ, your body would rapidly produce the corresponding antibodies again to fight the infection before you show signs or symptoms of the illness.

Millions of people each year are vaccinated with no side effects. There are vaccines available for many different diseases present in the workplace, including Hepatitis, Tetanus, Q Fever and Influenza. Some of these vaccines only need to be given once, others like the Fluvax should be given every year

as the influenza virus mutates.

The flu or influenza is the most common infectious disease in the workplace with a record number of influenza cases having already been reported in Australia this year (RACGP 2019). With early and widespread vaccination in the workplace, Employers should be able to significantly reduce the negative effect these diseases could have on their workplace.

For more information on workplace vaccinations, see the table below or contact CHG

Data Highlights

Healthy working adults vaccinated against the flu have 43% less sick days and 44% less doctor visits compared to those who aren't vaccinated.

(Nichol et al. 1995)

Occupational Risk Exposure	Vaccine	How Is This Administrated?
Seasonal Influenza (Flu)	Fluvax	One dose, repeated annually
Tetanus and Diptheria	ADT	Booster every 10 years, or after 5 years if sustain a tetanus prone injury
Tetanus, Diptheria and Whooping Cough	Boostrix	Booster every 10 years, or after 5 years if sustain a tetanus prone injury
Hepatitis A	Havrix	One course of two doses over 6 months
Hepatitis B	Energix B	One course of three doses over 6 months
Hepatitis A & Hepatitis B	Twinrix	One course of three doses over 6 months
Q-Fever	QVax	One dose only

Upcoming National Health Awareness Days

11 to 17 March 2019
Brain Awareness Week

24 to 30 April 2019
World Immunisation Day

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A CHG Case Study

Onsite Flu Vaccinations

In 2017, there were 251,142 confirmed cases of the flu and 1,255 deaths relating to the flu in Australia (ABS 2018). Every year, CHG's Flu Vaccination team attend workplaces and administer the Fluvax to more than 12,000 workers, from over 400 employers, to help prevent the spread of infection throughout South Australian workplaces and the community.

In 2018, CHG's team of nurses vaccinated 12,247 workers against the flu, and visited regional locations as far as Murray Bridge and Whyalla. Many of these employers were return clients of CHG, who engage CHG each year to provide an onsite vaccination program to their workers. The benefits of an onsite CHG Flu Vaccination program include:

- reduced absenteeism;
- increased worker productivity;
- preventing the spread of infection;
- promoting health in the workplace; and
- ROI through minimising LTI's.

For more information about onsite flu vaccinations contact CHG.

Data Highlights

Based on research data, CHG calculate the ROI to be \$4 for every \$1 spent on a CHG Flu Vaccination program.

(Nichol et al. 1995)

Permanent Impairment Assessment (PIA)

A Permanent Impairment Assessment (PIA) is an assessment performed by a specialist physician who has been approved as an accredited assessor by ReturnToWorkSA. When a worker's injury has stabilised, as determined by the treating medical practitioner and rehabilitation team, the Case Manager will discuss referral to an accredited assessor for a PIA. During the assessment, the specialist physician will determine:

- whether maximal medical improvement has been reached;
- whether an impairment exists as a result of the injury;
- whether this impairment is permanent; and
- what degree of whole person impairment (WPI) exists as a result of the injury.

The WPI is reflected in the form of a percentage score calculated by totalling the percent of permanent impairment sustained in each area of the body. A WPI score between 5% and 30% will qualify the injured worker to receive once off economic and non-economic loss lump sum payments. A WPI score of 30% or more (a seriously injured worker) may result in ongoing income support payments and medical expense coverage until pension age.

A worker can choose which accredited assessor they would like to see.

For more information about CHG's accredited assessors contact CHG.

CHG Clinic Elizabeth Vale Overview

For over 40 years CHG has served the Northern suburbs of Adelaide, initially from premises in Parafield and Salisbury under the name 'Work Health Clinic' and most recently from our CHG Clinic Elizabeth Vale. Partnering with local employers CHG Clinic Elizabeth Vale has grown to be the one-stop shop for everything work health related. Our suite of Occupational Health services currently includes:

- medical management;
- Specialist Physician assessment;
- pre-employment assessment;
- hearing assessment;
- drug and alcohol testing;
- physiotherapy,
- psychology,
- occupational therapy,
- hand therapy; and
- exercise physiology.



Celebrating...



Staff highlights for March include:

- **30 Years of Service**
- Dr Richard Heah
(Senior Medical Practitioner)

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<https://chg.net.au/about/news>

or scan the QR code.



Next month ... we will look at an occupational lung disease called silicosis, as well as how an employer can benefit from implementing a workplace health and wellbeing program. We hope you enjoyed CHG News. Let's keep your workplace healthy, happy and productive.