

Work Well Awards 2023

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Example entry

Category eight – Injured worker achievement award

1: Describe your injury.

In February 2021 I suffered a psychological injury due to a senior manager's aggressive management style. This individual had caused unnecessary stress, resulting in continued self doubt since 2017. At a meeting held on 24 February the individual was particularly rude referring to me in the third person while two other outside contractors were in attendance causing significant psychological trauma. In the months leading up to 24 February the Manager had increasingly disregarding my opinion and suggestions resulting in an increase in self doubt.

2: What was the impact of the injury on your life?

The psychological impact was significant. I was unable to discuss the details of 24 February meeting without busting into tears.

On that night I was unable to drive the whole way home and had to pull over on the side of the road and talk to my husband till I felt I was able to drive. I suffered from low energy and stopped exercising which resulted in a weight gain of over 10kgs. For several weeks I struggled to leave the house without my family being present. I struggled when talking to anyone from the employer including some people who were friends and trying to help me. I started to doubt my ability to get another job as I was unable to see that I had any transferable skills.

3: Return to work

In May 2022 after my claim had been accepted and the Manager had resigned, I returned to work on light duties and limited days per week. Two new Managers were employed as a result of his departure. This initial return was very difficult as I had to build new relationships with two new managers and a constant reliving of issues that I had raised prior to my injury then need to be addressed as a matter of urgency to ensure all claims were being processed according to NDIS rules.

Throughout the process Belinda Cox (Return to work Occupational Therapist) contacted me every Friday to ensure I was actively involved in my return to work plan and sometimes she was the voice of reason when I tried to return to increased duties too quickly.



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Unfortunately in September 2021 the constant pressure of having to fix processes that I had tried to raise prior to February 2021 took its toll. Belinda Cox and my psychologist Susanne Gilmore suggested that I might like to try and seek a return to work placement with a host employer completely different to the current NDIS Finance role so I could see that my skill set was sort after and transferable to other sectors. In October of 2021 I commenced a return to work plan with the host employer East Coast Apprenticeships. In this position I was able to feel part of a Team again and understand how some of my skills could be transferred.

Given I had not applied for a job outside the disability in nearly twenty years I struggled to understand how I could apply for jobs outside the disability sector, Workcover and Belinda Cox engaged a "Careers Advisor" Miriam Pius who assisted me to rewrite my resume, showed me different styles of applying for jobs based on the selection criteria. During this process it became evident that I did not have formal qualifications that matched my experience. Miriam and Rebecca T from Workcover assisted me to enrol in a Double Diploma in Human Resource, Leadership and Management.



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