



PREVENTION | CARE | CURE

Teamsafe

Keeping an eye out for each other



Spinal Cord Injuries Australia is a not-for-profit community organisation dedicated to promoting injury prevention and serving the needs of people with spinal cord injuries or similar conditions.

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Tens of thousands of people are seriously injured in the workplace each year, with many injuries resulting in death. Thousands more injuries do not proceed to a workers compensation claim but still cost employers and the economy millions of dollars. Such incidents have a ripple effect through the workplace, into families and communities.

No statistic can adequately account for the life-changing emotional impact of such incidents.

In response SCI Australia, has developed the new and innovative injury prevention program **Teamsafe** - designed to reduce the incidence of workplace injuries and fatalities by using the power of real injury stories to confront employee complacency toward Occupational Health & Safety (OHS).

Real stories are introduced into the workplace by **Teamsafe** Ambassadors - people who have sustained a catastrophic injury in the workplace such as a damaged spinal cord, loss of a limb, serious burns or impaired vision. They are professionally trained by SCI Australia to share their story and spread the message of safety first, to help prevent further injuries.

One of our most experienced ambassadors, Alex Traill, gives an insight into the reaction his presentation evokes:

“As part of the **Teamsafe** program, we can give employees an opportunity to experience sitting and moving about in a wheelchair. The experience usually gets a laugh but there is also a serious side. They begin to think about the consequences of such an injury and how it would change their own life.

Teamsafe engages employees in a new learning experience which makes OHS personally relevant. **They learn that safety requires a team approach with everyone keeping an eye out for each other.**”

Teamsafe has been developed for delivery to groups of twenty-five to thirty personnel over a thirty minute period with plenty of time for questions. This method encourages meaningful dialogue and maximum impact of the **Teamsafe** message.

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Working with a Disability - Facts and Figures

The number of those injured or affected by some form of disability is much higher than most people realise. Perhaps even more surprising is the difficulty they have in finding employment, despite research which shows how productive and conscientious they are.

In Australia there are more than 10,000 people living with spinal injuries. Statistics from 2002-03 show there were 394 new injuries, 92% of which resulted in neurological loss. Of the 62% caused by trauma, 55% were occupants of motor vehicles or unprotected road users, followed by falls (34%) water and other sports (13%). Males aged 15-34 had the highest number of injuries.

In 2001-02, Australian Bureau of Statistics data for the national workplace shows there were just under 140,000 accepted workers compensation cases which resulted in fatality, permanent or temporary disability.

A 2006 survey by the NSW Commission for Children and Young People, into working children aged between 12 and 16, found that 40 per cent had been injured at work. For 7 per cent, the injury was so serious they had to go to hospital or took at least three days off work or school.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) an estimated 386 million of the world's working-age people are disabled. Unemployment among the disabled is as high as 80 per cent in some countries. Often employers assume that persons with disabilities are unable to work.

A 2004 United States survey found that only 35 per cent of working-age people with disabilities are in fact working compared to 78 per cent of those without disabilities. Two-thirds of the unemployed/disabled respondents said they would like to work but could not find jobs.

One-third of the employers surveyed believed that people with disabilities could not effectively perform the required job tasks. The second most common reason given for not hiring the disabled was the fear of costly special facilities.

The same survey found that the actual cost of accommodations was only \$500 or less while 73 per cent of employers reported that their employees did not require special facilities at all.

Recent Australian research shows that out of all employees with a disability, 90% rate average or better on job performance. They also have a 72% higher retention rate - while on the issue of work safety, 98% of staff with a disability rate average or better.

SCI Australia –About Us

Spinal Cord Injuries Australia (SCI Australia) is a not for profit organisation working to create an environment where all people can participate fully. We are dedicated to the **PREVENTION** of catastrophic injuries, the **CARE** for those who have spinal cord or similar injuries and the support of research to find a **CURE** for spinal cord injury.

Advocacy

We offer a confidential link between consumers and service providers (including government departments) while protecting the rights of people with spinal cord injuries and similar conditions through both individual and systemic advocacy.

Geo and Data Processing

At SCI Australia we offer full and part-time employment and training for people with disabilities within an integrated environment, in data interpretation and processing, computer mapping and general office skills.

Information

Our experienced team at SCInfo provides a wide range of specialist information on disability issues. SCInfo also has a comprehensive library and publishes Accord, our quarterly magazine.

Peer Support

Experts agree that help and commonsense advice is invaluable at an early stage. SCI Australia puts people with spinal cord injuries and similar conditions in touch with others who have had experience in all areas where assistance is needed.

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Wheelies Challenge

Two education based programs to promote personal responsibility, risk awareness and resiliency. One is website-driven and aimed at both primary and secondary students - the second a customised in-school program facilitated by specially trained ambassadors.

SCI Workforce

A specialised vocational service which helps people living with a disability to find satisfying employment - also advising employers on worksite modifications and employer incentive funding.

Community Support

We help identify local services which can then be accessed to provide independent living in the community.

Day and After Hours Emergency Support

An on-call emergency service available to clients living in some municipal regions of Sydney.

Regional Services

Provides support services in some areas of regional NSW with regional officers available to make home or hospital visits when required.

Residential Services

Short term and transitional accommodation is available on a limited basis in the eastern suburbs of Sydney and in Coffs Harbour.

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