



the  
**COLLABORATIVE**  
Partnership  
*to improve work participation*

**DR ROBIN CHASE AM**

**Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine**





*the*  
**COLLABORATIVE**  
Partnership  
*to improve work participation*

A national effort by public, private and not-for-profit organisations to improve work participation




# Partners



# The Collaborative Partnership to improve work participation

Focuses on aligning the various sectors of Australia's work disability system to delivery better outcomes for people with temporary or permanent physical or mental health conditions by:

- breaking down the support system silos
  - helping employers reduce barriers to employment
  - helping GPs to support work participation
  - supporting employees to better understand the importance of good work in their health and wellbeing
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## Work participation is critical



Australian performance in employment of people with disability and return to work following ill health or injury has stagnated



What starts off as temporary ill health can turn into long term disability and worklessness

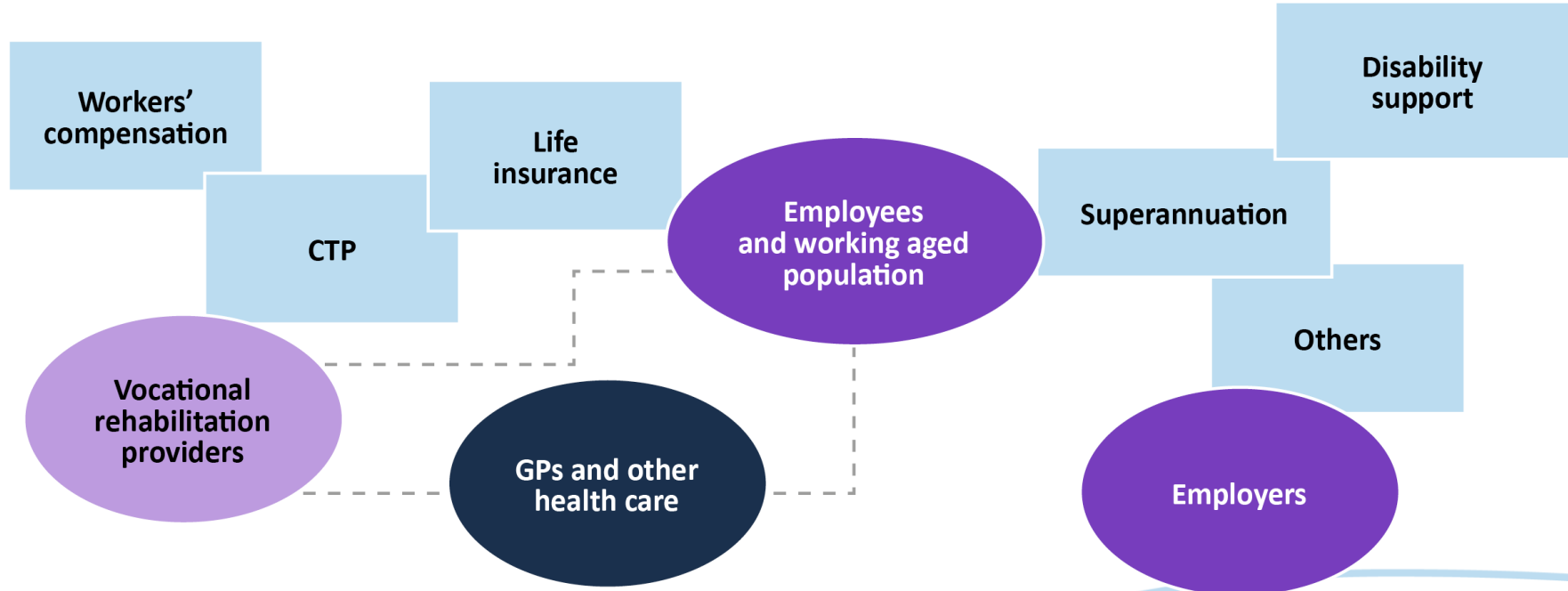


The longer that someone is off work, the more likely they are never to return




Societal costs include poor health, financial insecurity, social isolation, higher premiums, higher absenteeism, lost productivity and higher health and welfare costs


# Cross-sector collaboration is needed



# Four priority areas

1. **Cross sector system** – examining data and services across compensation and benefit systems, identifying the flow of people through systems, finding opportunities to improve services
  2. **Employer mobilisation** – examining attitudes and barriers and improving employers' capacity to provide work opportunities for people with health conditions
  3. **Employee awareness** – improving employees' understanding, promoting their role in using work as a part of their recovery
  4. **GP support** – developing nationally consistent approaches that will help GPs use work as a part of recovery
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# Cross-sector research

- Identify the systems and relevant services
  - Use data to determine the number of people in and moving between systems
  - Explore the supports and services available through each system
  - Consider the interaction of services across the different systems
  - Identify critical points where people move between systems and what is the cause
  - Find opportunities to improve work and health outcomes
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## Research findings

In Australia, during 2015-16\*

**786K**

people who were unable  
to work due to ill health,  
injury or disability received  
income support

**6.5M**

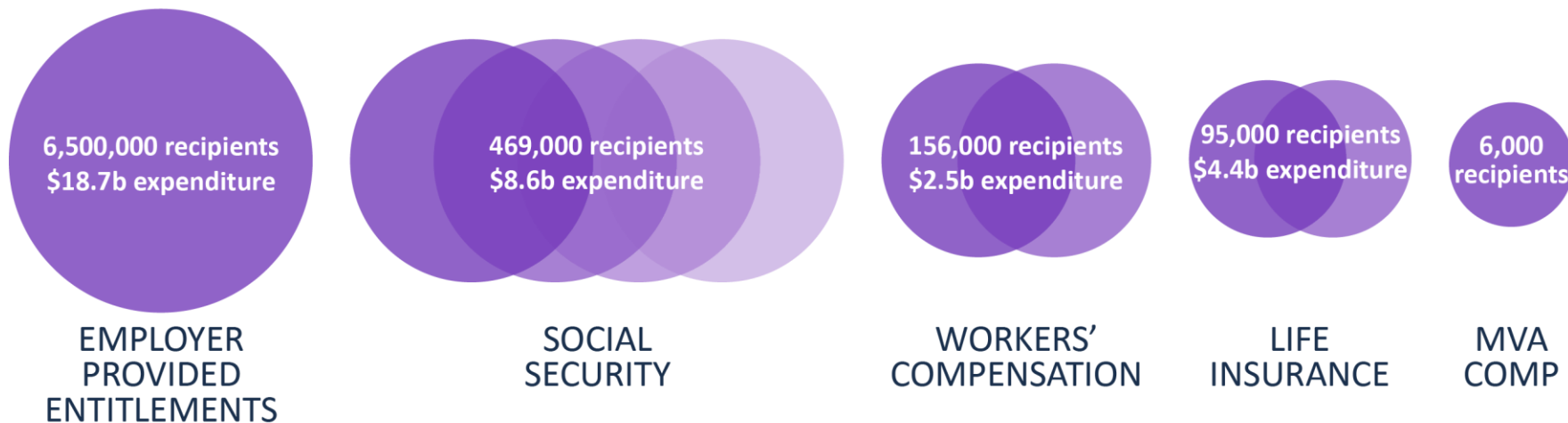
additional people accessed  
employer provided  
entitlements for short  
periods of work incapacity

**\$37.2**  
**BILLION**

was spent on income  
support for these people  
during the year

\*Estimates by Monash University

## Income support systems



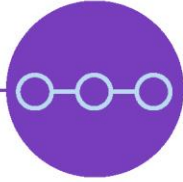
\*Estimates by Monash University

# Opportunities for improvement

There are opportunities to improve work and health outcomes through greater cross sector collaboration.



Information  
and data  
sharing



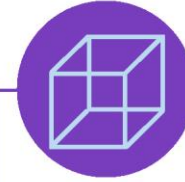
Aligning  
service  
models



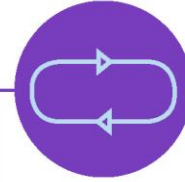
Earlier  
intervention



Employer  
engagement




Product  
and benefit  
design



Better  
system  
transition

## Employer Mobilisation

- Explore employer attitudes, motivations, experiences towards recruiting, supporting or accommodating people with a physical or mental health condition, illness, or disability
  - Survey of 2,500 businesses, public sector organisations and NGOs
  - Many employers have significant barriers to hiring people with health conditions and disability
  - Many of these issues fade with experience
  - Interventions will need to be targeted
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## Research findings

Of the employers surveyed:

**Less than  
half**

Had managed processes  
for recruiting,  
accommodating or  
managing RTW

**50%**


Felt confident in their  
business' ability to support  
a staff member with a  
health condition or  
disability

**16-20%**


Were open to supporting  
someone with a  
permanent health  
condition to participate in  
work



## GP support project

- Provide support to GPs regarding work participation
  - Development of a set of national principles of the role of GPs, relative to other stakeholders, in supporting work participation
  - The GP role can vary in each case, and a consistent understanding is required
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## Six major themes from stakeholder consultations


1. Individual choice and control
  2. Open communication
  3. Education and training
  4. Shared responsibility
  5. Stages of responsibility
  6. System-wide change
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# DRAFT Principles

**Principle 1:** GPs perform a patient advocacy role in work participation


**Principle 2:** GPs provide evidence-based assessment and diagnosis which draws on a patient's work participation goals and context

**Principle 3:** Following assessment and initial treatment, the patient and their GP determine in collaboration what role they will perform

- Principle 3.1: Where GPs perform a care coordination role, they will draw on support and information from other stakeholders
  - Principle 3.2: Where GPs perform a medical management role, they work with care coordinators to optimise health outcomes
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# Employee Awareness

- Empower employees to use good work to help their recovery, skill employees to navigate the systems, and improve work participation across multiple schemes
  - Build understanding of the health benefits of good work
  - Employees who can actively participate in good work have better outcomes when recovering from illness or injury
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[www.comcare.gov.au/collaborativepartnership](http://www.comcare.gov.au/collaborativepartnership)

