



## MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 5 April 2018

### NEW WAYS OF THINKING ABOUT INSURANCE AND CARE FOR WORKERS

Local employers, care providers and employees have been invited to the Wellington Visitors Information Centre on **Wednesday 11 April** to find out more about [icare](#), NSW's insurance and care provider and an industry leader in workers' insurance and care services.

icare Relationship Manager Maddi Bailes said since the new [icare](#) claims model was introduced on 1 January her team has been travelling across the state, meeting customers face-to-face to provide more information about changes to the workers insurance scheme.

"The 34,500 employees in Orana/Far West are covered by nearly 4,500 employer policies, with close to 750 workers compensation claims made in the past year," Ms Bailes said.

"We know that the number of claims here is approximately 40 per cent higher than the average, with 21 claims – compared to 15 – per 1,000 employees. The cost of claims is also 11 per cent above the NSW average (\$18,613 compared to \$16,799).

"The need to access data instantly was part of the rationale behind the biggest overhaul in 30 years to claims management. We can now advise employers about current local trends and variances. This way they can better understand the unique aspects of their region and find ways to reduce injuries, get employees back to work sooner, manage their policies more effectively and increase productivity.

"Local employees who have experienced mental ill-health take on average 107 days to return to work, which is lower than the state average of 120. The longer people are away from work, the greater their risk of social isolation and the increased likelihood of the onset of mental health issues, which can delay recovery," she said.

The [icare Foundation](#) is running the first trial for injured workers in Australia where GPs prescribe 'non-medical' interventions, like attending art classes, equine therapy and men's sheds. Through social and community engagement, physical health and mental wellbeing may improve and increase people's chances of returning to good health and work.

"The [icare Foundation](#), in partnership with [Everymind](#), is also embarking on a mental health e-strategy for small businesses. Our research found this group may be more likely to be affected by poor mental health than the general population," Ms Bailes said.

"The most common area of injury in this region is upper limbs (around 38 per cent), so employers may be interested in a trial we are running, using wearable technology to see what movements could be changed to reduce musculoskeletal disorders.

"Our team of injury-prevention specialists will be partnering with NSW businesses even more closely to provide support, and work with employers to develop practical improvement plans for injury prevention," she said.

"icare is changing the way people think about insurance and care. This forum is a chance for local employers to find out more about what's changed, new ways of preventing workplace injury and helping people return to work and recover sooner," Ms Bailes said.

**WHERE:** Wellington Visitors Information Centre, Cameron Park

**WHEN:** Wednesday 11 April, 5pm for a 5.30pm start

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**About icare:** icare (Insurance & Care NSW) is the insurance and care provider for NSW.

We insure 3.7 million workers, motorists and builders and 296,000 employers. For more information, visit: [www.icare.nsw.gov.au](http://www.icare.nsw.gov.au)

