

When your injured employees need medical treatment

*injury*NET

Where the good doctors are

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About InjuryNET

InjuryNET is a practitioner network organisation. We specialise in identifying, training and monitoring practitioners for services required by our clients. InjuryNET directors and staff are experts in areas such as early intervention for workplace injuries, assessment of fitness-for-duty and pre-placement medical assessment.

History

InjuryNET started in Victoria in 1998. Within a year, InjuryNET established national access to the Practitioner Network. We continually focus on expanding coverage and improving access.

Capability

InjuryNET organises, manages and controls the infrastructure and manpower resources to ensure consistent, reliable and cost-effective service delivery.

For example, in 2010:

InjuryNET's Practitioner Network treated more than 15,000 work-related injuries.

InjuryNET coordinated more than 20,000 Pre-Placement Medical Assessments

InjuryNET coordinated more than 500 Fitness-for-Duty Assessments.

Relationships

With over a decade of consistent network and business growth, InjuryNET has demonstrated capability to implement strategic partnerships with practitioners.

Flexibility and Responsiveness

InjuryNET recognises the importance of being able to respond to clients' needs at short notice to assist them with their organisational goals. InjuryNET has a proven track record in this area. We anticipate that as conditions and policies change we must respond to new initiatives and extraordinary circumstances. InjuryNET is well staffed with multi-skilled personnel and IT systems for managing unpredictable workloads.

Service Standards

InjuryNET has identified 4 key areas of Service Standards for Practitioners:

- Medical Practice Standards
- Customer Service Standards
- Professional Service Standards
- Qualification Standards

Acceptance of referrals for InjuryNET projects implies agreement to InjuryNET Service Standards. Practitioners are provided with a full description of InjuryNET Service Standards upon initial training with InjuryNET.

Overview of Services

InjuryNET specialises in systems which promote communication and cooperation between organisations and primary care medical practitioners. InjuryNET links clients with Practitioners who are proactive, communicative and aware of the consequences of their decisions. InjuryNET Practitioners understand the need for:

- prompt access
- communication between all parties
- detailed knowledge of the needs of the client
- relevant, detail-specific medical information

Services

InjuryNET has expertise in the following areas:

- Injury Management
- Pre-placement Medical Assessment
- Fitness for Duty Assessment

Depending on customer needs, the network can also be used for specialist programs such as Flu Vaccinations and Health Assessments.

InjuryNET provides advice, training and coordination to optimise the benefits of using the Practitioner Network. InjuryNET assists clients to design programs for their needs.

Types of Practitioners in the Network

InjuryNET Practitioners are mainly General Practitioners and Physiotherapists, all of whom operate within a primary care setting. Since InjuryNET is focused on providing the earliest possible primary care for injuries and illnesses, we work with GPs to ensure prompt access.

How InjuryNET Charges

Organisations using InjuryNET for treatment of work-related injuries agree to pay:

InjuryNET

- Implementation Fee - a once-only fee for program establishment which includes planning, training for managers and communication to network practitioners regarding an organisation's focus on early intervention.
- Access Fee - an annual fee, for access to the network via the telephone number, appointment coordination, reporting and program management.

Practitioners

- Treatment Fees - set by WorkCover Fee Schedules. These usually become claim costs, if a claim is submitted.
- Practitioner Program Fees - these fees relate to practitioner participation in InjuryNET Programs. When we prepare a proposal, we include an estimate of Program Fees, to enable an organisation to budget for covering these fees.

Frequently Asked Questions



Do employees have to attend an InjuryNET Practitioner for treatment?

Employees always have the right to choose their own treating Practitioners. InjuryNET's experience has been that a majority of employees who choose to attend an InjuryNET practitioner have been pleased with the prompt treatment, communication and reassurance regarding recovery and return to work.

How can Managers encourage injured employees to attend an InjuryNET Practitioner for treatment?

The key to encouraging injured employees to attend InjuryNET Drs is to offer the service immediately when an employee reports an injury. Eg: "Sorry to hear you've been hurt. You know we have the InjuryNET Practitioner Network service? Would you like me to call and see if I can get you an appointment ASAP?" Present the service as a benefit or resource to workers, similar to an EAP or Wellbeing initiative such as flu shots or health checks. Do not present it as a 'company doctor' program. Do not force workers to attend an InjuryNET Dr. This just sets up an 'us and them' situation where motives may be questioned.

What if a Manager can't take an employee to the appointment?

If a manager cannot take an employee to an appointment, InjuryNET will list the Manager's name and contact details on the referral form to the doctor. After examining the injured employee, the doctor will call the manager, with the employee present and the three of them will discuss return to work options and restrictions. This ensures that all parties can contribute to the return-to-work process. Best practice suggests that an employer accompanying injured employees to the doctor promotes good communication and better return-to-work outcomes. However, this is not always practical or possible. So managers can take the next best solution, and be ready and waiting for a call from the InjuryNET doctor following examination.

What if the employee wants to go to his / her own doctor?

As mentioned before, employees have the right to choose their treating practitioners. The employee may have a longstanding relationship with his/her doctor. Or the employee may be suspicious of an employer-recommended program. This typically changes over time, as employees begin to have positive experiences with the network doctors and (hopefully) hassle-free return-to-work. If a worker does choose to attend his / her own doctor for treatment, ensure the doctor has information about the company's focus and resources for assisting injured workers with return to work.

What if the injury is not work-related?

If uncertain, arrange an appointment with an InjuryNET Doctor. If the injury is not medically considered to be work-related, the employer will cover the cost of the visit to the Dr but the employee will need to arrange and pay for further treatment.

Can Managers refer to InjuryNET for second opinions?

We recommend that the network be used for treatment rather than second opinions. Instead, focus on getting injured employees into treatment with doctors who understand the physical, emotional and financial impact of work related injuries. If required, your company's workers compensation insurer can assist with referrals to doctors for second opinions or independent medicals.

How fast can I get an appointment?

In most cases, we can arrange appointments within 24 hours of request, in metro regions. Sometimes it takes a bit longer in country regions. We work with clients to get the best results with Doctors, to generate the best outcome we (collectively) can, given the constraints of a lack of doctors, particularly in country regions. Attempts to guarantee appointment speed fail mainly because of the reality of medical practice being consumed with emergency prioritisation and the lack of doctors, especially in regional areas. In our ten+ years of

operation, we have found that trying to set appointment standards (for example: appointments within 4 hours) only leads to disappointment and frustration for all parties concerned.

Do I call InjuryNET to make follow-up appointments?

No. The treating InjuryNET Dr will make follow-up appointments with the injured employee, as required.

Can I get a list of Practitioners in my area so that I can call them direct?

No. InjuryNET saves managers the time and hassle of calling around to get an appointment for an injured worker. We communicate with the practitioners and practice managers on a very regular basis and can cut through potential confusion. Managers only have to go looking for the InjuryNET telephone number rather than hunting around for a list that is probably out of date and collecting dust on a forgotten shelf!

How are Practitioners selected?

InjuryNET identifies and selects Practitioners on the basis of their communication skills, interest and experience in occupational injury management, ability and willingness to follow program protocols as outlined in InjuryNET Practitioner Training and Standards. InjuryNET works with Practitioners who are independent and can provide considered and balanced opinions on the basis of communication with all stakeholders - employers, workers, other practitioners, insurers etc.

How are Practitioners trained?

When a practitioner elects to participate in the InjuryNET network, we provide basic concept training, focused on considering whether time off is medically necessary or not. In most cases, time away from the workplace is not medically necessary! We encourage Doctors to discuss return-to-work (stay at work) options with managers and injured employees, prior to certification. This three-way communication significantly improves understanding and commitment to recovery, for all stakeholders.

Frequently Asked Questions



What are the payment arrangements for Practitioners?

InjuryNET Practitioner fees are based on private medical and physio rates. In some states these rates are higher than WorkCover fees. In addition to treatment fees, InjuryNET Practitioners charge for phone calls, which are a key factor in successful injury management. They also charge for site visits, non-attendance and physio treatment notification forms. Practitioners are paid direct by employers or the employer's workers compensation insurer. These rates apply for the entire duration of a case.

What is the commercial relationship between InjuryNET and Practitioners in the network?

The relationship between InjuryNET and Practitioners is purely one of referral and information provision. Practitioners are paid directly by the organisations (or their insurers) who contract InjuryNET's services. InjuryNET is paid by the organisations who contract us to assist with identification, development, implementation and monitoring of a treatment network for the organisation.

What is the InjuryNET 4/4 Model?

The 4/4 Model refers to provision of the first four doctor visits and first four physiotherapy visits as part of an early intervention program. InjuryNET's 4/4 model is a nationally consistent protocol for doctors and physios. It is a guide for them, regarding what to do / order / coordinate in the early intervention phase of injury management. It does not prevent workers from having more treatment if required, rather provides a check-point for practitioners regarding the status of a

claim (if there is one). The goal is to create a consistent, systematic approach for all InjuryNET-affiliated practitioners. The benefit is that over 10+ years, InjuryNET practitioners have come to know what is expected and work within the system, comfortably and effectively.

The 4/4 Model also benefits employees. Some organisations promote the fact that when employees choose to attend an InjuryNET practitioner; the first four visits will be paid by the organisation. This encourages early reporting and intervention. It also promotes the concept of InjuryNET being a resource for employees. In most cases, the costs of the first four doctor and physio visits eventually become claim costs.

What happens after the first four visits?

Once an injured employee has completed 4 doctor visits or 4 physio visits, ongoing visits will need to be covered by either an accepted claim or by the injured employee. Usually the treating practitioners can give you an idea of the number of visits likely to be required. They know to confirm claim acceptance before proceeding with more than 4 visits.

Is InjuryNET a Rehabilitation Provider?

No. InjuryNET is a Practitioner Network. We coordinate access to early medical treatment for injured employees. We do not get involved in case management for return to work, though many of us have worked in the rehab industry and are very familiar with RTW case management. For assistance with RTW Plans, we recommend you contact your organisation's RTW Coordinator or preferred Rehabilitation Provider.

What hours are Practitioners available?

Generally, from 8:30am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday. We understand that many of our clients would like to have 24/7 access to doctors. So would we. However, the practitioners who are good at injury management do not tend to work outside of traditional work hours. Our experience has been that injured workers have difficulty accessing their own treating doctors after hours; and in many cases, we are able to obtain an appointment on the next working day.

Access Hours (for all time zones)

Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:30pm

During these hours, managers can call and coordinate appointments for injured workers.

After Hours Referral Request Service (for all time zones)

Weekdays: Monday to Friday, 5:30pm to 8:30am the next morning

Weekends: From Friday 5:30pm, including Saturday & Sunday, to Monday 8:30am
Public Holidays

After hours, managers can call and speak with an operator who will take down referral details. Please Note: the service does not provide injury management advice. On the next business day, InjuryNET will coordinate an appointment and advise the manager of appointment details.

If an injury is serious, the injured employee should be taken to the nearest hospital. InjuryNET can then provide access to the network for follow up treatment by an InjuryNET GP. In this instance, Managers should call InjuryNET following the worker's discharge from hospital, to arrange an appointment for ongoing treatment by a GP, if required.

For more information on accessing the InjuryNET Practitioner Network for work-related injury treatment, call (03) 9500 9968.

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