

Media statement

31 July 2019

Make health the most important part of your tool kit

August is **Tradies National Health Month**, and Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) is helping to raise awareness of the risks posed to those who work in trade occupations.

Australia's trade industry continues to have among the highest health and safety issues of any sector. Time off work due to poor health and injury has a significant impact on families, businesses and communities.

SCHHS Executive Director of Allied Health Gemma Turato says this impact will grow if we don't take steps to change behaviour.

"We need to get tradies to prioritise their health so that they can continue to play the important roles they hold in the workforce, their families and the community at large. Australians' reliance on the work that tradies do is huge, so we need to encourage them to seek proper, evidence-based care before their small niggles become large issues that potentially lead to time off work."

Ms Turato said when most people think of tradies health concerns, we most commonly assume them to be musculoskeletal, such as back or tendon pain, but physiotherapists can treat much more.

"While these conditions make up the majority of tradies seeking treatment, physios also treat and manage a whole range of health conditions, from sport injuries through to chronic illnesses like heart disease and diabetes as well as stroke recovery and even pelvic floor issues that many men face," Ms Turato said.

"Physically demanding trade jobs can exacerbate all these conditions, but physio treatment can help, either through a prescribed preventative management exercise program tailored to individual needs, or as a post-injury rehabilitation treatment."

"Tradies health must be everyone's priority, employers and families are being urged to get behind Tradies National Health Month, and tradies, make your health the most important part of your toolkit!," Ms Turato said.

For more information, or to get involved, visit www.tradieshealth.com.au

Fast facts*:

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- Tradies account for 60% of all injury and musculoskeletal disorders across all occupations
- Tradies account for 39% of all medical conditions across occupations
- Median lost work time for tradies as a result of serious claims is 5.4 weeks
- 40% of serious claims by tradies are for upper limb injuries, ie hands, wrist elbow, shoulder
- The Australian Physiotherapy Association is calling on all tradies, their employers and families to get behind Tradies National Health Month this August and spread the message from the top of our buildings to the bottoms of our drains and pipes: Tradies, make your health the most important part of your toolkit!

*Data from Australian Physiotherapy Association

Interview opportunities with Executive Director of Allied Health, Gemma Turato available on request.

ENDS

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