



Washington State Department of  
**Labor & Industries**

*Workers' Compensation Services*

# Helping Workers Heal and Return to Work

## L&I Vocational Rehabilitation Conference

Friday, May 2, 2014 | 7273 Linderson Way SW, Tumwater | L&I Auditorium



Return to Work Minimizes the Social and Economic  
Impacts of Workplace Injuries





Dear Colleagues:

*Helping Workers Heal and Return to Work* is not only the theme for this year's Vocational Rehabilitation Conference, but one of L&I's strategic goals for 2013-2017.

This year's speakers will bring you updates and information on new initiatives that will help you support injured worker recovery. They'll also share the importance of the work we do together through a series of "healing stories."

Stories like the worker from a Spokane drycleaner whose work-related shoulder injury prevented her from using the press. Her employer appealed to L&I's Stay at Work Program. With modified duty and the purchase of an air-operated press, she was able to recover while keeping connected to her job. Or the story about the truck driver who, after his injury, worked with his Voc Rehab Counselor to secure an internship for retraining with his employer. His retraining goal: become a dispatcher. Within a year after his injury, he achieved his goal and was offered full-time employment with a company, starting at \$17.31 an hour.

If you ever doubted the important role a Voc Rehab professional has in helping an injured worker heal and return to not just a job, but to their life, then this year's conference will help reinforce the critical job you hold.

Today, we'll cover:

- How to work with employers to educate them about the benefits of return-to-work.
- New support systems for on-the-job training that you can tap into.
- How expanding the Centers for Occupational and Health Education (COHE) affect you.
- Grants you should know about that help shape return-to-work practices.
- This conference also will reinforce the point that time is a factor in helping the injured worker.

L&I studies show that if an injured worker does not return to work in the first three-to-six months, the chances of getting back to work within two years is less than 50%. After nine months, the rate drops to just 36%. After one year, the chance of returning to work drops to just 26%.

Thank you for being at this year's conference. We're delighted you're here and hope that you'll leave today with new ideas and renewed energy toward helping improve the outcomes for injured workers.

Sincerely,

Keith Klinger  
CRC, Course Director





- 7:30 a.m. **Registration**
- 8:10 **Keynote Address**  
Joel Sacks, Director, Washington State Department of Labor & Industries (L&I)
- 8:30 **L&I's Goal 2: Helping Injured Workers Heal and Return to Work**  
Vickie Kennedy, Assistant Director for Insurance Services, L&I, Ryan Guppy, Chief of Return-to-Work Partnerships, L&I
- 9:15 **Break**
- 9:30 **Return-to-Work Incentives and Supports**  
Chris Ver Eecke, M. Ed., CRC, Stay at Work Program Outreach, L&I, Sarah Martin, OTR/L, Therapy Services Coordinator, L&I, and Steve Edwards, OTR/L, CDMS, Preferred Worker Program, L&I
- 10:15 **Understanding Workers' Compensation Insurance Rates and Selling Employers on Return to Work**  
Bobbie Hanna, DOSH Risk Manager, L&I
- 11:00 **Workplace Based Training – New Supports for OJT**  
Sandy Schramm, M. Ed., CRC, Portland Community College, Betsey Carrillo, BS, VRC, Portland Community College
- 11:45 **Lunch on your own**
- 1:00 p.m. **What Does COHE Expansion Mean to You?**  
Morgan Wear, Susan Campbell, Karen Ahrens, and Noha Gindy, COHE Medical Program Specialists, L&I
- 2:00 **Break**
- 2:15 **Resources for Work Readiness**  
Ted Collins, WorkSource Specialist, WorkSource Thurston County
- 3:15 **Return-to-Work Safety and Health Improvement Project (SHIP) Grants**  
Jenifer Jellison, DOSH SHIP Grant Program Manager, L&I
- 3:45 **Closing Remarks and Adjourn**  
Keith Klinger, M.Ed., CRC, Course Director, L&I

## Program Accreditations

*Accreditation of a total of six hours pending through:*

- Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC)
- Certification of Disability Management Specialists Commission (CDMS)

## Facility

*L&I offers a full-service cafeteria and espresso bar on the 2nd floor.*

## Questions?

*Contact Keith Klinger, Conference Planner, at [Keith.Klinger@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:Keith.Klinger@Lni.wa.gov) or 360-902-6362*



## Bios



### **Joel Sacks, Director of the Department of Labor & Industries (L&I)**

On Jan. 16, 2013, Joel Sacks was appointed Director of the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries by Governor Jay Inslee. L&I's mission is to "keep Washington safe and working." The agency administers a number of critical programs including the state's workers' compensation system and its occupational safety and health program. Before joining L&I, Joel worked more than seven years at the state Employment Security Department serving as Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner for the Budget, Policy and Communications Division. Prior to joining Employment Security, he was Deputy Director of Field Services at L&I. He also served four years at the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in the U.S. Department of Labor. Joel holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Haverford College and a master's degree in public administration from Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Public Affairs. He lives in Olympia with his wife and two daughters.



### **Vickie Kennedy, Assistant Director for Insurance Services, L&I**

Vickie Kennedy is the Assistant Director for Insurance Services at the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, managing one of the nation's largest workers' compensation programs. She oversees approximately 1,000 employees involved with L&I's workers' compensation functions, including Claims Administration, Employer Services (Policy and Account Management), Health Services Analysis (management of provider fee schedule and medical cost containment efforts), Office of the Medical Director, and the Self-Insurance program. Formerly, she was the Director's Chief Policy Advisor and worked closely with agency leadership, external stakeholders and legislators on workers' compensation policy and approaches to improve Washington's system for employers and injured workers. Vickie has also managed the Insurance Services Policy and Quality Coordination and Pension programs. Vickie has been with L&I in the workers' compensation field for more than 40 years.

**Ryan Guppy, Chief of Return-to-Work Partnerships, L&I**

Ryan's responsibilities include administration of vocational rehabilitation services and Washington's Stay at Work Program. He is also tasked with forming collaborative relationships with a number of internal and external stakeholders. Ryan is a registered Vocational Rehabilitation Provider with Washington State. Prior to his employment at L&I, Ryan worked for several years within an Interdisciplinary Chronic Pain Management Program as a Vocational Rehabilitation Provider and Director of Business Development. He also served for many years as private sector Vocational Rehabilitation Provider working on State Fund and Self-Insured cases. Ryan has played leadership roles with several industry associations to include: Board Member, President Elect, President, and Past President for The Washington State Chapter of The International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals, Membership Chair Person for the Greater Seattle/Washington Chapter of The Disability Management Employers Coalition, and a Board Member of the Vocational Technical Stakeholders Group. Ryan received his bachelor's degree in sociology/criminology from Western Washington University in 1998 and obtained his Certified Disability Management Specialist credential in 2007. In 2012, Ryan became one of the initial Washington State Vocational Rehabilitation Providers to become certified in the Progressive Goal Attainment Program. He has also obtained multiple certificates associated with business development, sales, and corporate training.

**Chris Ver Eecke, M. Ed., CRC, Stay at Work Program Outreach, L&I**

Chris is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin with a M.Ed. in Rehabilitation Counseling. He is a Certified Rehab Counselor, Certified Case Manager and a Certified Disability Management Specialist. Chris helped to develop the Return to Work (RTW) Program for the Texas Workers' Compensation Insurance Fund and served on the RTW Guideline Committee for the Texas Workers' Compensation Commission. Chris has been with L&I for four and a half years both in the Early Return to Work Program as well as the Stay at Work Program. Chris also spent two years working for SAIF Corporation in Oregon as a RTW Coordinator and 10 years in the private sector as an advocate for individuals with disabilities.

**Sarah Martin, OTR/L, Therapy Services Coordinator, L&I**

Sarah started with L&I in 1998 as L&I's Internal Ergonomics Coordinator. In 2006, she became the Therapy Services Coordinator within Return to Work Services. In this position, she is the technical resource for job modification and pre-job accommodations benefits, home and vehicle modifications, occupational, physical and massage therapy related issues to include performance-based physical capacity evaluations and work hardening. Prior to coming to L&I, she worked in different settings as an occupational therapist and continues to work in a skilled nursing facility.



# Bios

## **Steve Edwards, OTR/L, CDMS, Preferred Worker Program, L&I**

Prior to coming to L&I, Steve earned his bachelor's degree in occupational therapy in 1990 from the University of Puget Sound and spent many years working in industrial rehabilitation as a therapist and private sector rehabilitation counselor. Steve has worked as a Vocational Services Specialist for L&I since 2002. Steve began his career in the Vocational Dispute Resolution Office and more recently transferred to the Preferred Worker Program.

## **Bobbie Hanna, Division of Occupational Safety and Health Risk Manager, L&I**

Bobbie has over 25 years' experience as a Safety and Loss Control Manager. She served on the Association of Washington Business Workers' Comp Legislative Committee as Chair, Washington Christmas Tree Committee representing small business, and the Prevention of Long Term Disability Committee. Bobbie has experienced positive results when employers, injured workers, doctors, vocational counselors, and programs within L&I work together to prevent on-the-job injuries, returning injured workers on modified duty and reduction of long-term disability. Bobbie is currently employed by L&I as a Risk Manager.

### **RETURN-TO-WORK SUCCESS STORY:**

A worker at a local drycleaner injured her shoulder while hand ironing. By appealing to the Stay at Work Program, her employer was able to cover a portion of the costs to purchase an air-operated clothing press—work that was within the injured worker's medical restrictions. The worker was able to return to work after being off for 15 months.

## **Sandy Schramm, M. Ed, CRC, Portland Community College**

Sandy has been the Director of Occupational Skills Training for Portland Community College for the past eighteen years. She earned her master's degree in rehabilitation counseling from California State University in Fresno. She is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor with over 30 years of experience. She has served as Director of Rehabilitation Services for United Services, a mental health agency in Northeastern Connecticut and as the Sacramento Division Manager for PRIDE Industries in Roseville, California. She also has experience in private sector rehabilitation working with injured workers in California and in Oregon.

Sandy is an active member of OARP and was selected as the Rehabilitation Professional of the Year in 2004.

## **Betsey Carrillo, BS, VRC, Portland Community College**

Betsey is a Coordinator in the Occupational Skills Training Program at Portland Community College. Currently, she is on the Board of Directors of OARP (Oregon Association of Rehabilitation Professionals). Betsey has a Bachelor of Science in psychology from the University of Oregon and is certified as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor with the Oregon State Workers' Compensation Department and previously worked as a Vocational Counselor in Oregon at Bostwick Krier & d'Autremont providing services to injured workers.

**Morgan Wear, COHE Medical Program Specialist, L&I**

Morgan oversees the Centers of Occupational Health and Education (COHE) Program at L&I. Morgan has worked at L&I since 2005, and has a background in managing quantitative and qualitative research studies at the University of Washington, School of Medicine. Morgan has a master's degree from The Evergreen State College.

**Susan Campbell, COHE Medical Program Specialist, L&I**

Susan has worked at L&I in the COHE program since 2000. She also is the lead for the Progressive Goal Attainment Program (PGAP) pilot at L&I.

**Karen Ahrens, COHE Medical Program Specialist, L&I**

Karen is a contract manager for the Center of Occupational Health and Education (COHE) at UW Medicine/Valley Medical Center of Puget Sound. This COHE, which began in 2002, was the first COHE and has been known as Renton COHE in the past. Karen has worked at L&I since 1989 in all levels of claim management including claim unit supervisor. She joined L&I's Health Services Analysis in 2007.

**Noha Gindy, COHE Medical Program Specialist, L&I,**

Noha has been the L&I Contract Manager for the COHE at The Everett Clinic since 2010. In addition, she has been the business lead for the design and development of the Occupational Health Management System (OHMS) since the project's inception in 2011. Noha joined L&I in early 2010 and has a background in health care non-profit start-ups and large private sector information technology projects. Noha has a master's degree from the University of Washington, Seattle.

**Ted Collins, WorkSource Specialist, WorkSource Thurston County**

Ted has been with the Employment Security Department as an Employment Counselor for over 16 years. For the last 15 years, he has facilitated workshops on such topics as skills and abilities analysis, job search strategies, applications, resume and cover letters, interviewing, and a re-employment workshop specifically designed for newly unemployed and long-term unemployed workers. In 2002, he was a team member of WorkSource Grays Harbor which was honored by the International Association of Workforce Professionals (formerly IAPES) with the "One-Stop of the Year Award." In his spare time he enjoys writing novels, screenplays, and is a U.S. Patent owner.

**Jenifer Jellison, DOSH Safety and Health Improvement Project (SHIP) Grant Program Manager, L&I**

Jenifer is the program manager for SHIP. She has worked in the Division of Occupational Safety and Health for 14 years and is the creator of the SHIP program. SHIP funds grants that address identified occupational safety and health issues as well as return-to-work (RTW) grants that are intended to help industries bring to life creative solutions that will get injured employees back on the job sooner and reduce long-term disability. There is currently no monetary cap for RTW grants proposals; however, projects are limited to a 12-month timeline. These grants are accepted on an ongoing basis.



# Synopsis

## **Vickie Kennedy and Ryan Guppy: L&I's Goal 2: Helping Injured Workers Heal and Return to Work**

Key focus areas are:

### **A: Create a return-to-work culture**

- Increase the percentage of workers who return to work in the first six months by:
  - Using Future State/Predictive Analytics (pilot)
  - Efficient hand offs
  - Early Ability to Work (AWA) experiment

### **B: Decrease percentage of preventable disability**

- Increase return to work in six months
- Decrease time-loss persistence
- Increase overall customer experience to "good" or "very good"
- Reduce the development of long-term-disability
- Adoption of COHE best practices
- Identify psycho-social issues
- Partnership with WorkSource

### **C: Collaboration between department staff and external partners to reduce delays**

- Decrease number of time-loss days paid three months post injury
- Standard work

## **Chris Ver Eecke, Sarah Martin, and Steve Edwards: Return-to-Work Incentives and Supports**

Chris, Sarah, and Steve will present and discuss an overview of the employer incentives for hiring injured workers. For the Stay at Work Program, this will include how to identify and access the different types of employer reimbursements. For the Preferred Worker Program, this will cover the benefits including, who qualifies and answers to commonly asked questions. For job modification and pre-job accommodation benefits this will include understanding the difference

between these benefits and the Stay at Work benefits and how job modification and pre-job accommodation assists workers with return to work. There also will be information on how to access and use these resources.

### **RETURN-TO-WORK SUCCESS STORY:**

While driving truck, a worker injured his back to the point that returning to driving was not an option. His vocational counselor referred him to training with a vocational goal of becoming a dispatcher. He completed a 12-month full-time internship with a local transportation company where he was able to utilize his knowledge of the trucking industry while learning new skills to be employable. One week after completing his training, he was offered a job at another company with a wage of \$17.31 per hour.



## **Bobbie Hanna: Understanding Workers' Compensation Insurance Rates and Selling Employers on Return to Work**

Many employers have no idea how a workplace injury can affect their workers' compensation insurance premiums. Many are reluctant to bring an injured worker back on modified duty. Unfortunately, both the injured worker, who is left sitting at home, and the employer who has failed to return their employee on modified duty, lose. By educating employers and workers in Washington State, we can reduce the duration of time-loss injuries and significantly reduce long-term disability. Risk Management is a program that was designed to educate the employer community. Risk Managers help employers make workplaces safe and educate employers on the physical and financial benefits of returning an injured worker on modified duty, which reduces unnecessary costs in the workers' compensation program. Risk Management helps make it easier for businesses, workers, doctors and other providers of services to do business in Washington State.

## **Sandy Schramm and Betsey Carrillo: Workplace Based Training – New Supports for OJT**

Portland Community College will present an overview of their Occupational Skills Training Program. This innovative program has served injured workers in Oregon for over 30 years and has been a key element in worker retraining success. PCC Occupational Skills may be a tool for Washington vocational counselors to assist injured workers in acquiring employment skills.

### **RETURN-TO-WORK SUCCESS STORY:**

A Spokane landscaper stepped in a pothole while on the job, fracturing his ankle which required surgery. A savvy Health Services Coordinator (HSC) at the Eastern Washington COHE saw the worker was cleared for light-duty and immediately called the worker. With two children to support, he was eager to return to work. The HSC contacted the employer, a family-owned business, who indeed had a light-duty job available. Currently, the landscaper is working in his light-duty job while awaiting surgery. He plans on returning to light-duty shortly after surgery. Without the quick response of the HSC, this worker could have been sitting at home and had a very different outcome.

## **Morgan Wear, Susan Campbell, Karen Ahrens, and Noha Gindy: What Does COHE Expansion Mean to You?**

COHE is a collaborative project that works with medical providers, employers, and injured workers in a community-based program. COHEs improve injured worker outcomes and reduce disability by training providers on best practices and coordinating health services for injured workers. There are currently six COHEs in Washington with plans for further program expansion so that all injured workers have access to COHE care. This presentation

includes an overview of the COHE Program and current expansion efforts, related best-practices pilots, information about COHE Health Services Coordinators, and an introduction to the Occupational Health Management System (OHMS).



# Synopsis

## Ted Collins, Resources for Work Readiness

Elements for a successful job search strategy begin with having a positive attitude. One of the key findings from employers at a business summit in January 2005, sponsored by Pacific Mountain Consortium and Grays Harbor Chamber, reported, “Attitude is as essential as technical skills for job seekers and incumbent workers. Attitude was defined as wanting to work, taking responsibility, caring about the job, showing respect and willingness to take direction from

supervisors.” Published news articles and surveys before and since 2005 support this statement: *having a positive attitude is not only critical in getting a job, but also in keeping it.* Additional key factors in the job search process include having a job search *plan*, researching employers and the positions that they have within their organization, careful consideration on how far you are willing to commute, targeting what kind of work you want to do, knowing where to look for work, understanding what knowledge, skills and abilities you have to offer, and being able to communicate that information with a well drafted, *functional* resume that matches the employer’s needs and eventually produces an interview that leads to an offer of employment.

## Jenifer Jellison: Return-to-Work Safety and Health Improvement Project (SHIP) Grants

### RETURN-TO-WORK SUCCESS STORY:

Eastern Washington University employed a worker who fell, fracturing his ankle, pelvis and leg—very serious injuries and ones that would require a long convalescence. Yet, the worker wanted to work. His physician, who knew about L&I’s Stay at Work Program, said he could return to work on light-duty, but would need a scooter to move around. By working together, EWU, the provider and the injured worker were able to utilize light-duty and the Stay at Work Program to help the worker.

SHIP grants are available through L&I for employers interested in developing sustainable return-to-work (RTW) practices. Among last year’s grantees was the city of Port Orchard, where a \$62,000 grant is being used to help develop light-duty job descriptions for 70+ city employees as well as other RTW practices and policies. The city named their project “Light Duty = Right Duty.” Another SHIP grant was awarded to the Master Builder’s Association of King and Snohomish Counties to

build a Return-to-Work Toolkit. A list of the 2013 RTW SHIP grant projects can be found at <http://www.Lni.wa.gov/Safety/Topics/AtoZ/Grants/Approvals.asp>.

## Keith Klinger: Closing Remarks and Adjourn







