



## **Letter of Information**

### ***Using Multiple Stakeholders to Define a Successful Return to Work***

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to gain the perspectives of various stakeholders in the return to work process on how they would define a successful return to work. You are being invited to participate in this study because you have experienced a return to work (RTW) following an injury or because you are a professional who helps people with some aspect of return to work after injury. The study will involve two phases, the first of which you are being invited to participate in. This phase of the study involves your participation in a brainstorming group, an individual sorting and rating task, and a follow-up interpretation group. The second phase to take place later will involve a completely new group of RTW stakeholders who will discuss the information from the first phase of the study, to see if they agree with your findings.

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information so that you can decide whether or not you wish to participate. It is important that you understand why the study is being conducted and what is required of you. Please take the time to carefully read this and ask any questions if information is unclear or you come across wording you do not understand.

#### **What does study participation entail?**

Participants will be asked to first attend a group brainstorming session with anywhere from 11 to 39 other participants. The session will be held in Elborn College at the University of Western Ontario. The exact room location, time and date will depend on participant availability but will be scheduled at the most convenient time for all potential participants. The group will consist of two sub-groups referred to as RTW consumers, made up of participants representing workers, and RTW providers, representing people who assist injured workers with returning to work. Participants will be given some background information on the current state of return to work outcomes and measurement before attending the group. During the brainstorming session, participants will all work together to generate a list of ideas and statements in answer to questions regarding what a successful return to work should look like. Participants are discouraged from making negative statements about past or current situations and encouraged to focus on what their ideal situation would look like. This session will require about 2 hours.

The investigator will ask participants whether their preferred method of communication is mail or email. Based on each participant's preference, participants will be either emailed or mailed a copy of the list that was generated during the brainstorming session and asked to sort and rate the ideas according to a set procedure. Those participants who choose to use mail will receive a

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package that includes a return-addressed, stamped envelope for returning the sorting and rating data to the investigator. The participants using email will receive instructions and an email address for returning their sorting and rating data. The time will vary but it is estimated to take anywhere from 30-90 minutes to complete this task. The results will be sent back to the investigators for analysis.

A follow-up group session will be scheduled once all the data is analyzed, approximately 2-3 weeks following the initial group session. This follow-up session will also take place in Elborn College at the University of Western Ontario. The researcher will contact participants by phone or email to determine the exact time and date based on participant availability and convenience. During the follow-up group participants will be asked to look at the results of the data, and assign names and labels to the findings. This session is estimated to take about 2 hours.

Both group sessions will take place at the University of Western Ontario. The exact time and location will depend on participant availability and convenience. Participants will be provided with free parking and if required taxi or bus reimbursement. Participants driving more than 50 km will be reimbursed at a rate of \$0.54/km. Participants who participate in both group sessions and the sorting and rating task will be reimbursed \$20.00 for their time. Refreshments will be served during the group sessions.

#### **Are there any risks to being a participant?**

There is little to no personal risk expected from your involvement with this study. Participants, particularly those from the worker group, will not suffer any impact to current or future benefits or employment. No identifying data will be shared or released by the researchers to any other group. Strategic sampling techniques will be utilized which includes screening potential participants with questions regarding employment type and location, so that participants from one group will be unknown to participants in the other group (i.e. a participant in the worker group may know others in that group but will not know anyone from the provider group and vice versa).

Participant contact information will be stored in a locked lab and a password protected computer. No personal information will be included in the results of the study, and all information will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

#### **Who will benefit from this study?**

Participant will not experience any direct benefits; however, the long-term benefit will be a more standardized and holistic definition for return to work. This standardized definition, that will include all stakeholders' perspectives, will result in improved outcome measures of RTW programs and the RTW research so that comparisons among studies and programs can be made to determine which interventions are most effective. More effective programs will benefit injured workers and their families, employers and communities at large in terms of pain and suffering, quality of life, productivity and costs.

#### **Confidentiality and consent**

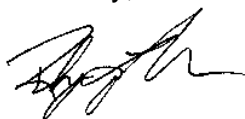
Personal information is collected for contact purposes and will not be made available to anyone outside this study. Contact information will be kept locked in the lab of Dr. Lynn Shaw in the School of Occupational Therapy at the University of Western Ontario and will be destroyed upon

completion of this study. All participants will be asked to maintain confidentiality by not revealing names of other participants, and to refrain from repeating or describing events that take place during the group. Information about employment and profession will be reported in future publications only to describe the stakeholders who participated in the study but no one will be identified by name. No generated idea or collected data will be identified by name in the study report. If the results of the study are published, participants' names will not be used. Representatives of the University of Western Ontario Health Sciences Research Ethics Board may contact you or require access to your study-related records to monitor the conduct of the research.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Participants will be asked to sign a consent form at the beginning of the first group session and will be given this letter and a copy of the signed consent form for their records. If you agree to participate in this study, you have the right to withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without penalty. However, any data collected to that point, except for personal identifying data would remain in the study.

I am undertaking this study for my thesis as a doctoral student in the Rehabilitation Science Program at the University of Western Ontario. The other investigators in this study include co-supervisors Dr. Alan Salmoni and Dr. Lynn Shaw. If you have any questions about this study, please contact me, or either of my supervisors. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study you may contact the Office of Research Ethics (519) 661-3036, email [ethics@uwo.ca](mailto:ethics@uwo.ca).

Sincerely,



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