

Overview of Early Support Services (ESS)

WAIS and the wider Health & Safety Services team has developed an initiative for supporting employees with work-related injuries called *Early Support Services* (ESS).

Early Support Services is available to all employees who have sustained a minor work-related injury and wish to seek reimbursement/payment of their medical costs associated with the injury.

Early Support Services commenced from 1 September 2022.

Why provide Early Support Services?

The primary objective of ESS is to help injured employees recover faster from work-related injuries by removing barriers to early treatment (e.g., financial pressure, waiting for lengthy claim processing times etc.).

We anticipate that this service will encourage earlier reporting of incidents, building on relationships between Health & Safety and the wider University community, ensuring employees of the University are supported and reducing overall costs associated with workers' compensation claims.

What do Early Support Services cover?

The total amount that the University will pay per case/incident is \$1,500.00 towards medical and like services required for the work-related injury.

The type of treatments includes:

- Medical Practitioner's consultations and allied health services such as Physiotherapy, Osteopathy and Psychology, etc. For further information regarding the types of treatment which could be approved, please refer to [Worksafe](#)
- Within the \$1500.00 limit, The University will also fund one (1) of the following diagnostic imaging/testing: x-ray, MRI scan, nerve conductivity test, ultrasound scan or CT scan.

Employees may access concurrent treatments if these treatments do not exceed \$1,500.00 total. For example, an employee may see a GP, physiotherapist, and a psychologist under ESS, but will need to closely monitor the total costs as this can accumulate quickly with multiple treatments.

How do I apply for Early Support Services?

We have made this process simple. To access Early Support Services, you will need to submit a ServiceNow form.

For more information, please visit our webpage on the application process.

Does applying for Early Support Services prevent me from applying for workers' compensation?

No. The purpose of ESS is to provide early support for injured employees with the intention of facilitating a faster recovery from a work-related injury. Due to financial pressures, waiting for the outcome of a workers' compensation/WorkCover claim can delay an employee's access to early treatment for their injury.

All employees have a right to submit a WorkCover claim however cannot access both WorkCover and ESS concurrently. Employees can withdraw from ESS and submit a WorkCover claim at any time in the process.

If an employee is close to the limit payable under ESS, WAIS will discuss further options with them, including potential submission of a claim.

How to I access further information about ESS?

Please visit our Early Support Services webpage, also accessible via the University's Health & Safety website.

Provide your preferred contact details and a summary of your enquiry via email to the WAIS team at uom-wais@unimelb.edu.au. A member from the WAIS team will contact you.

You may also contact your local [Health & Safety Business Partner](#) (or equivalent).