



# WORKPLACE ACCESSIBILITY AND INJURY SUPPORT (WAIS) EARLY SUPPORT SERVICES (ESS) INFORMATION

## 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 a voluntary program and 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.

### 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.

Generally, 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 under ESS, but will need to closely monitor the total costs as this can accumulate quickly with multiple treatments.

Note: The ESS support program does not replace any proactive injury preventative program undertaken by the University departments, faculties or associated subsidiaries. Any costs connected with delivery of these programs will remain within the local area.

## How do I apply for Early Support Services?

We have made this process simple. To access ESS, you will need to submit a ServiceNow form or a manual application form that can be emailed (for those employees that do not have access to ServiceNow).

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](mailto:uom-wais@unimelb.edu.au). A member from the WAIS team will contact you. Alternatively, you may contact your local [Health & Safety Business Partner](#) (or equivalent).

## Early Support Services Incident Response Process

The below flowchart outlines the process for injured workers to access information about Early Support Services for work-related injuries. To access ESS for an injury, you must have a specific medical diagnosis from a doctor. Your treating practitioner will detail your exact diagnosis, and the affected bodily location.

Employee ESS Process	
<p><b>Step 1 - Report the Injury</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Injured employee submits an Incident Report via ERMS: Notify your manager / supervisor as soon as possible and ensure the incident is logged in the workplace Register of Injuries within 30 days.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Employees will receive an automated email in response to the incident report with details of how to access the ESS program. The same information can be found via the <a href="#">Early Support Services webpage</a> &amp; ESS information and factsheet.</p>	
<p><b>Step 2 – Obtain an official diagnosis and work connection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An injury must be a recognized and diagnosable condition (e.g., fracture, lumbar sprain, or nerve damage). The initial diagnosis must be issued by a medical practitioner (e.g., your GP). Subsequent updates can be issued by physiotherapists, osteopaths, or chiropractors.</li> <li>To access ESS, your employment must be a significant contributing factor to the injury or caused its aggravation.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Step 3 – Employee submits the application for review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The injured employee reviews information on ESS and submits <a href="#">ServiceNow</a> / or manual request form if they wish to access these services (<a href="mailto:uom-wais@unimelb.edu.au">uom-wais@unimelb.edu.au</a>). When applying, employees should consider the scope of available services.</li> <li>The WAIS team will make an assessment on the injured employee’s eligibility for ESS (within 5 business days) and notify the employee.</li> </ul>	
Program services (In scope)	Program limitations (out of scope)
<p>A short term minor work-related injury is defined as an injury that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occurs whilst engaged in employment activities.</li> <li>Is expected to resolve the matter within a discrete period.</li> <li>Has little expectation of ongoing symptoms, treatment, or expenses.</li> <li>Requires a limited number of consultations with a doctor (GP and/or specialist, combined).</li> <li>Requires short-term allied health treatments (such as physiotherapy, osteopathy, chiropractic etc.) – These services are limited to <b>diagnosable conditions</b> only.</li> <li>Requires diagnostic imaging / testing, up to one (1) of the following: x-ray, MRI scan, nerve conductivity test, ultrasound scan or CT scan.</li> <li>Does <b>not</b> exceed \$1,500.00 total treatment cost.</li> </ul>	<p>Program limitations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel ‘to’ and ‘from’ appointments</li> <li>Allied health physiotherapy, osteopathy, chiropractic (all considered as concurrent treatment – double up will not be authorised).</li> <li>Services provided by remedial massage / masseurs are not within the program scope and will not be authorised.</li> <li>Treatment requirements for general well-being, pre habilitation or proactive injury preventative program(s).</li> <li>Common illnesses such as colds, gastro, Covid-19 etc.</li> <li>Conditions for which the employee is already receiving treatment (e.g., post-surgery recovery).</li> <li>Injuries that are severe in nature and require emergency assistance or hospitalisation.</li> <li>Personal items (e.g., spectacles, watches, phones and clothing) that are damaged in connection with a minor work-related injury.</li> <li>Mental health injuries - Individuals enquiring about mental health support via ESS will be referred to existing mental health support available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers Compensation claim (provisional payments).</li> <li>The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides independent and confidential services, as well as support materials to all employees. There is a variety of services such as financial coaching, legal advice, nutrition coaching, counselling services and more.</li> <li>Counselling &amp; Psychological Services (CAPS) provides free, confidential, short-term counselling for staff. All counsellors are employees of the University and have a wealth of experience in assisting you to develop adaptive strategies to support you at home and at work. If you are new to CAPS or haven’t attended the service this year, book an appointment by calling 03 8344 6927, or visiting CAPS on Level 5, 757 Swanston Street, Parkville</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Early Support Services – Payment/reimbursement process

The below flowcharts outline the processes for reimbursement of medical expenses to injured employees and payment of medical expenses directly to services providers in relation to Early Support Services for work- related injuries.

When injured employee has already paid the invoice	When UoM pays service provider directly
<b>Step 1</b> - Injured employee seeks medical attention.	<b>Step 1</b> - Injured employee seeks medical attention
<b>Step 2</b> - Injured employee pays for the medical service.	<b>Step 2</b> - Injured employee asks that the service provider bills UoM directly for the service and provides UoM’s billing details (see billing information on next page).
<b>Step 3</b> - Injured employee requests an itemised receipt.	<b>Step 3</b> - Provider invoices UoM directly
<b>Step 4</b> - Injured employee submits receipt to WAIS inbox ( <a href="mailto:uom-wais@unimelb.edu.au">uom-wais@unimelb.edu.au</a> ) for reimbursement.	<b>Step 4</b> - WAIS team reviews the submitted invoice and determines whether payable under ESS
<b>Step 5</b> - WAIS team reviews the submitted receipt and determines whether it is payable under ESS.	<b>Step 5</b> - WAIS processes the reimbursement within 7* days of the received date. *If the service provider is required to be set up as a “vendor” in the case management system, this process may take longer (for the first payment only).
<b>Step 6</b> - WAIS processes the reimbursement within 7* days of the received date. *If the injured employee is required to be set up as a “vendor” in the case management system, this process may take longer (for the first payment only).	

## Important Information (reimbursement details)

### Invoice/receipt requirements

A valid invoice/receipt must contain the following information:

- Name of business/clinic
- Name of service provider (i.e., doctor)
- Clinic/provider contact details (address, phone number, fax, email)
- Clinic/provider's ABN
- Injured employee details (name, address, date of birth)
- Invoice/receipt number
- Date of service
- Item number
- Service fee charged
- GST charged (if applicable)

**Note:** Early Support Services can only reimburse for medical services provided in Australia.

### Timeframe for first payment/reimbursement

- If the injured employee or service provider is required to be set up as a "vendor" in the case management system, payment of the invoice may take longer than usual. The WAIS team will contact the injured employee or service provider to advise of the process for vendor set up.

### Timeframe for ongoing payments/reimbursements

- WAIS processes the reimbursement within 7 days of the received date. When a valid invoice or receipt is received by WAIS before 12pm on a Tuesday, the injured employee or service provider should receive payment/reimbursement by Friday afternoon (dependent on banking institution).
- If the invoice/receipt is received after 12pm on a Tuesday, the payment or reimbursement should be received by the next Friday afternoon.

### Billing information

Service providers/clinics should be provided the following billing information:

Workplace Accessibility and Injury Support – Business Services  
The University of Melbourne  
Level 1  
11 Barry Street  
**CARLTON VIC 3053**

Submit all invoices/receipts via email or fax:

Email: [uom-wais@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:uom-wais@unimelb.edu.au)

Fax: 03 8344 3057

All invoice-related enquiries should be submitted in writing to [uom-wais@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:uom-wais@unimelb.edu.au)