

possible. This allows the team to have a case conference with the injured worker, their health care provider (if they wish to attend) and the Case Manager in approximately a week following admission. If there are any additional investigations or consultations recommended that cannot be performed within 3 days of admission the case conference may be delayed, but is held as soon as possible. Contact is also made with the injured worker's employer to discuss available return-to-work options as well as the option to attend a portion of the case conference dealing with return-to-work.

During the case conference the **EMPOWER** team presents their recommendations and return-to-work plan to the injured worker and the Case Manager. Full opportunity is given for the injured worker to discuss the **EMPOWER** team's findings and any questions they may have related to the recommended treatment plan.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE EMPOWER ASSESSMENT?

The report and recommendations from the **EMPOWER** team are shared with the Family Doctor, as well as any other health care professional involved in the injured worker's care. The health care providers within the injured worker's community are vital to ongoing recovery and the return-to-work process. These health care providers are given the opportunity to discuss the recommendations with the **EMPOWER**

team to ensure that there is agreement on the ability to follow through with these recommendations. Treatment will then be continued with the injured worker's own health care provider.

Six to eight weeks after the case conference has occurred the **EMPOWER** team will follow up by telephone with the injured worker and their treating health care provider to determine if the rehabilitation and return-to-work plan is progressing.

For more information about the **EMPOWER** multi disciplinary assessment program please contact the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission or FIT for Work directly.

WHSCC Contact Numbers

St. John's

Phone (709) 778-1000
Toll free 1-800-563-9000

Grand Falls-Windsor

Phone (709) 489-1600
Toll free 1-800-563-3448

Corner Brook

Phone (709) 637-2700
Toll free 1-800-563-2772

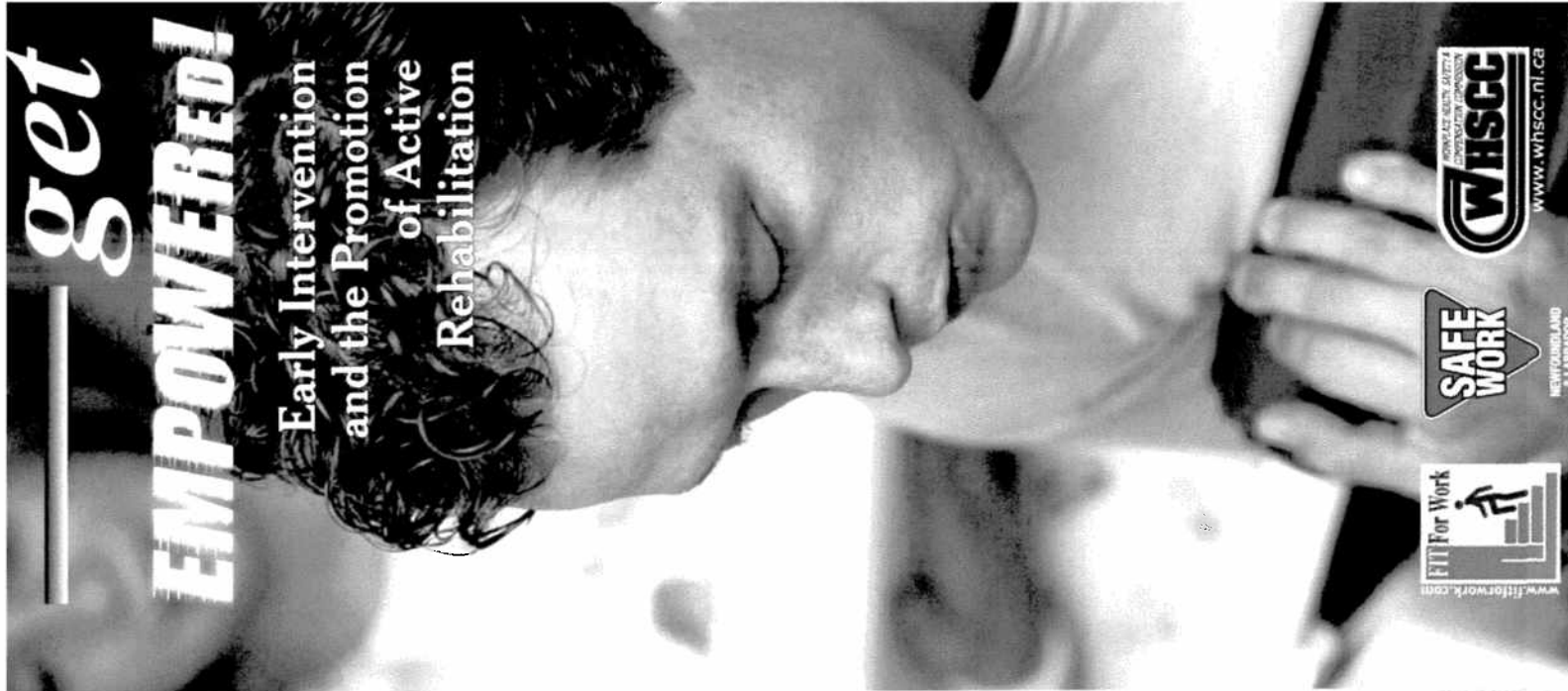
FIT for Work Contact Numbers

St. John's

Phone (709) 722-7676

Corner Brook

Phone (709) 632-7676



get EMPOWERED!

Early Intervention and the Promotion of Active Rehabilitation



Whenever possible, remaining in the workplace throughout injury recovery is the goal after any work-related injury. When an injured worker does stop working as a result of his or her injury, a major factor in the return-to-work process is early intervention and the promotion of active rehabilitation.

The Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission is working together with a local health service company FIT for Work who have assembled a group of health care professionals, known as the **EMPOWER** team. The goal of the **EMPOWER** team is, to provide high quality multidisciplinary assessments of injured workers in an effort to facilitate the Early and Safe return-to-work process through the provision of realistic rehabilitation goals and recommendations.

These assessments give injured workers the information and tools they need to understand their injury and fully participate in their recovery and return-to-work.

WHAT IS THE EMPOWER PROGRAM?

The **EMPOWER** program provides multidisciplinary assessments of injured workers for the purpose of assisting workers, employers and Case Managers to identify an effective treatment plan to facilitate early and safe return-to-work. The program has a team which consists

of a medical doctor, and an occupational therapist, who are able to access a physiotherapist, a chiropractor, an orthopedic surgeon and high tech diagnostics when clinically indicated, to offer a comprehensive assessment and diagnosis.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE EMPOWER PROGRAM?

The overall purpose of the **EMPOWER** program is to ensure all injured workers referred to the **EMPOWER** Team receive prompt and professional medical consultation to confirm diagnosis and establish appropriate treatment and rehabilitation plans in order to promote injury recovery and early and safe return-to-work.

WHEN IS AN INJURED WORKER REFERRED TO EMPOWER?

Although an assessment can be performed at any time during an injured worker's recovery, it is known that early intervention is extremely important. For this reason, most injured workers are referred to the program within three months of their injury date.

HOW IS AN INJURED WORKER REFERRED TO EMPOWER?

If an injured worker has not returned to work within eight weeks of his or her work-related injury, the WHSCC Case Manager

will consider the appropriateness of a referral for further evaluation, at which time the **EMPOWER** program may be considered.

Family Physicians, as well as other health care providers, may also contact the Commission and suggest a referral to the **EMPOWER** program on behalf of their patient.

WHO MAKES UP THE EMPOWER ASSESSMENT TEAM?

All injured workers are seen by a Medical Doctor, an Occupational Therapist, and Program Coordinator. During this baseline assessment, it is determined whether further consultation with a physiotherapist, a chiropractor or an orthopedic surgeon is necessary.

It is also determined during the **EMPOWER** assessment whether other medical/diagnostic tests may be necessary.

HOW LONG DOES THE ASSESSMENT TAKE?

The baseline assessment at **EMPOWER** is a full day, starting at 8:45 a.m. It is usually completed within 3 days from the date of the injured worker's admission to the program. If it is determined that additional assessments beyond the baseline team are required, these assessments are scheduled on a priority basis with the goal that all results are received within one week of the initial baseline assessment whenever

Early Intervention + Managed Care + Proactive + Outcome Focused + Worker Centered + Employer Involved + Reassurance, Recovery and RTW