

Tradies National Health Month Campaign

August is Tradies National Health Month (TNHM) – an awareness initiative that focuses on the importance of tradies health.

Physiotherapists are uniquely placed to prevent and treat musculoskeletal concerns throughout a worker's lifespan and with tradies making up 30 per cent of the workforce, it's in all our interest to help them stay healthy.

Toolkit

Download the variety of social tiles from the [TNHM campaign page](#).



Messaging

Some messaging you can post alongside or gain some inspiration from, when sharing the campaign imagery.

Make sure to end your posts with a **call to action**. Choose one of the following:

- Choose physio for a long and healthy life on the job.
Go to choose.physio/tradieshealth to find out more.
- Physiotherapists can help tradies to boost longevity and working until they are ready to retire.
Find out how: choose.physio/tradieshealth

General campaign messaging

1. With tradies making up 30 per cent of the workforce, it's in all our interest to help them stay healthy.
2. Tradies experience serious workplace safety incidents that keep them away from work at higher rates than other occupations. Construction is one of the top industries in workplace injury rates.
3. 1 in 6 Australians suffer from chronic low back pain that can be exacerbated by repetitive stress over a career in physically demanding work.
4. 85% of workers involved in workplace safety incidents continue to work in the job where their injury or illness occurred.

Six reasons messaging

1. Work safe and smart for a long, healthy career

Tradies are disproportionately affected by workplace injuries. Body stressing, lifting, pushing, pulling or bending, is the leading cause of workplace injury.¹

Physiotherapists are experts in the function of muscles, joints, ligaments and bones. They can provide guidance on risk assessment, safety protocols, and manual handling at work to help you avoid musculoskeletal injuries. Occupational Health physiotherapists can also provide guidance on ergonomics and workplace design so you can work smarter and longer until you are ready to retire.

2. Act early when it comes to low back pain

One in six Australians suffer from low back pain. Heavy, awkward, and repetitive manual tasks undertaken by tradies puts them at an even greater risk of back problems which are a significant cause of pain, impairment and lost productivity.²

Don't risk injury or acute back pain developing into a chronic condition. Physiotherapy treatment can help you prevent, manage and recover from low back pain. Physiotherapists assess and treat using a range of interventions including tailored graded exercise programs, and offer guidance on injury management, return to work and prevention strategies.

3. Fit for work does not mean fit for life

75 per cent of Australian adults do not meet the recommended physical activity guidelines, putting them at risk for chronic conditions, including back pain, heart disease, and cancer, as well as experiencing decreased wellbeing.³

Research suggests that occupational physical activity (i.e., heavy physical work) alone does not provide the same health benefits as leisure time physical activity and is not a substitute for regular exercise.⁴ Physiotherapists can work around your hours, assess your abilities and provide practical ideas and a tailored program to help you achieve your physical goals for work and life.

4. Bodies change as you age, so should the way you work

Brains and bodies change with age. Adjusting your tasks and modifying how you get them done is key to staying effective and safe, so you can have a long healthy work life.

Occupational health physiotherapists are experts in supporting your changing body throughout your career. The way you hold, or handle objects or lift can be changed to suit your changing physical state as you age:

- Regularly interrupt repetitive manual handling tasks with recovery breaks and engage in other activities like note-keeping or a five-minute stretch
- Utilise stools, step ladders, or other tools to reach high areas without twisting your body to prevent common strains
- Take advantage of technology and tools such as trolleys, hoists, lifts, or cranes to assist with heavy lifting

5. Drive for longevity by setting up your vehicle right

Tradies spend long periods in their vehicles getting to job sites and can face common risks such as incorrect seating, poor posture, and constant vibrations that can lead to driving-related musculoskeletal injuries.

Each tradie is unique in height and weight, and it's crucial to set up and adjust their vehicles accordingly for safety and comfort. Occupational Health Physiotherapists specialise in assessing

vehicle ergonomics. They can provide practical recommendations tailored to your individual needs, reducing the risk of musculoskeletal injuries while driving. Adjusting your seat, headrest, mirrors, and steering wheel based on their expert guidance ensures a safe and comfortable driving experience.

6. Longer sleeps make for a longer career

Tradies get less sleep than most other professions particularly remote shift workers who have a higher risk of developing sleep disorders and experience higher injury rates. ⁵ The physiological and cognitive impairments after being awake for 17 hours are to blowing 0.05% on a breathalyser and can increase your risk of accidents and injury and ultimately affect life expectancy.

Too little sleep is associated with an increased risk of chronic conditions, including diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity and depression. It can also lead to fatigue, poor concentration and memory and lower reaction time. ⁶

Physiotherapist's can help tradies suffering sleep issues from pain and stress through hands on treatment, dry needling, acupuncture and tailored exercises. The specific requirements of a good bed, pillow and sleeping position can also change as we age or experience pains. Physiotherapists can provide advice on the most appropriate setup to help you have a good night's sleep.