

Early Contact Checklist

This checklist guides the vocational therapist in their early discussion with a client following their traumatic injury to support engagement with the client, their family and the employer. The checklist questions are general in nature and designed to establish rapport. More detailed information will be established during the more formal vocational assessment process.

Topics	Responses/comments/actions
1. Introducing yourself	
<input type="checkbox"/> Your discipline <input type="checkbox"/> Your role: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To support and guide return-to-work journey (e.g. until discharge, back at work).• To meet with multidisciplinary team to discuss therapy and return-to-work goals.• To provide liaison between the client, treating team, employer and insurer (if relevant). <input type="checkbox"/> Any questions about your role?	
2. Finding out about the client's work	
<input type="checkbox"/> Where did they work? <input type="checkbox"/> What did they do? <input type="checkbox"/> Did they enjoy it? <input type="checkbox"/> Any thoughts or concerns about work? <input type="checkbox"/> What financial support do they have?	

3. Finding out about employer contact

- Have they or anyone else talked to their employer?
- Would they like you to make contact with the employer and provide updates as recovery progresses?
 - If so, discuss what will be disclosed or discussed – practical information about the process (not medical details).
 - Offer to call their employer with them present.
 - Always obtain permission to contact employer.

4. Explaining the return-to-work process

- The general approach – explain that:
 - It is best not to make decisions about return to work too early.
 - The decision about when to return to work is based on recovery and recommendations from the doctor and treating team.
 - Planning return to work involves meeting with the client and employer to discuss how best to return to work.
- Starting work – explain that:
 - They are likely to start work part-time due to fatigue, therapy, or medical appointments.
 - They are likely to start with modified duties to ensure work is realistic for the hours and suits their capacity.
 - Regular reviews will enable duties and hours to be managed as their recovery progresses.
- Approach if return to work is unlikely – explain that:
 - Support will be available to look at other options if it is likely they will not return to their pre-injury role.
- Insurer role
 - Explain the role of the insurer if relevant.