

## Case study

# Divya's story

### Taking action to reduce workers' compensation stigma

#### Supporting the injured worker

Divya managed a team of 12 in a large accounting firm. One of Divya's team members slipped and fell whilst at work. The worker called in sick the next day.

Divya knew taking prompt action was important, so reached out to the worker to check in and supported them to report the injury to human resources (HR), see a doctor and seek advice about claiming workers' compensation. With Divya's encouragement and the support of HR, the worker successfully made a claim and received financial assistance for their medical expenses, including physiotherapy.

#### Ensuring a supportive team culture

Some of the others in Divya's team weren't as understanding and made subtle comments about the worker exaggerating their injury. Divya noticed they also excluded the injured worker from a team lunch, saying it was because the restaurant had stairs and they didn't want to risk hurting the worker further. The injured worker told Divya they thought it might be best to take some time off to get away from the situation.

Divya sat down with her team to talk about the workers' compensation process and the injured worker's experience, ensuring the worker felt included and understood. Divya emphasised that access to workers' compensation is a workplace right and is there to provide financial support so the worker can focus on getting better. Divya made sure the whole team had access to materials about the accounting firm's workers' compensation processes.

Divya knew that her actions played an important part in creating a supportive team environment. She set an example by calling out the judgemental behaviour, using inclusive language, displaying empathy and regularly checking in with the worker. Divya's actions positively influenced the team's attitudes and behaviours, protecting the worker from judgement and negative comments.

The inclusive environment that Divya created meant it wasn't necessary for the worker to take time off and they could successfully recover at work, leading to a better outcome for the worker, their team and the broader organisation.

#### Improving policies and procedures

Through Divya's experience as a manager in the workers' compensation process, she identified areas for improvement in the organisation's processes and procedures, which were outdated and required review.

Once the processes were updated, Divya arranged training courses focusing on educating and raising awareness among managers about how they could support workers who get sick or injured at work, including how to best have supportive conversations about claiming workers' compensation.

Divya's actions and commitment to creating a safe and supportive workplace resulted in a positive outcome for the worker and reduced stigma in her organisation around claiming workers' compensation.

As a manager, it's my job to support my workers and help them get the assistance they are entitled to.

Maintaining a respectful and encouraging team is so important, especially when someone is recovering from a workplace injury.

*Divya, manager*



**Investing in recovery and return to work = better outcomes for all**



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