

A Program  
for Injured  
Workers



PLUS SOCIAL FOR INJURED WORKERS:

# Moving forward to new challenges

## Gatik's story

Due to a work-related repetitive strain injury, Gatik developed significant nerve pain in his right shoulder in 2014. Following his injury, Gatik's employer offered light duties for a period of three months. Unfortunately, the injury did not improve and Gatik was unable to return to work.

*"I was tired of  
being at home.  
I wanted to  
give something  
new a go."*





*"With PCCS,  
I have gone places  
that I didn't know how  
to get to".*

## Overview

After his injury, Gatik needed to feel motivated and regain a sense of connection, independence and purpose. Plus Social was able to:

- Link Gatik to supports like financial counselling
- Reconnect Gatik socially into local community networks
- Help Gatik explore interests such as fishing and cooking
- Support Gatik to work with health professionals to address his unmet needs.

## Life after injury

Gatik lives with acute and severe nerve pain, and has not been able to return to work since 2014. This has impacted his ability to attend to daily living tasks, like cooking and cleaning. He also has a tough time at night, with sporadic and patchy sleep.

Following his injury, Gatik had little contact from his employer or colleagues at work, even after 10 years of service. He couldn't participate in the activities he and his son used to enjoy due to his injury, and their connection waned. The slow dwindling of Gatik's social circle and the end of an intimate relationship compounded his isolation.

Financially, Gatik's basic living expenses, such as rent and food, outweighed his insurance payments. He used his credit card to cover this gap creating more financial hardship. He withdrew from his interests and enjoyable activities due to the costs, further isolating him.

Gatik felt bored and hopeless about his future with limited belief that he could ever return to his previous employment. He rarely left home, except to attend medical and rehabilitation appointments. He had no ability to reflect on alternative work options.

## How we helped

Gatik was connected to a free financial counselling service in his local area. Together with the counsellor, Gatik negotiated with his bank, super fund and income insurance provider to develop a sustainable financial plan that will see him reduce his debts and sustain himself financially into the future.



*"PCCS are a more personalised service. They got through to what I wanted. They listen."*

Gatik is beginning to reconnect with local community networks such as an over 55s dance and bingo group that runs twice a week and is accessible by foot from his home. Although his right shoulder has not recovered, he feels excited to contribute by giving the group a cooking lesson.

These supports and connections have provided Gatik a more positive and hopeful outlook as he now looks to a new chapter in his life.

With his social and practical needs starting to be addressed, Gatik is considering alternative employment options. Gatik has re-engaged with his workplace rehabilitation provider and they are working collaboratively to explore options for returning to the workforce.

## What's better

Plus Social has helped Gatik take more control over his current situation, allowing him to refocus and look to the future. He feels more in control of his finances, more connected with his community, better able to manage living with his pain, and more ready to return to work. New connections have improved Gatik's social participation, and re-developed his sense of belonging and connectedness. This connectedness has extended to his professional connections, and he feels a renewed sense of hope working with his rehabilitation provider.

Gatik has a number of unmet physical needs which he is planning on discussing with his GP for further medical input. He is waiting for approvals for a second pain clinic treatment, as well as further specialist appointments.

After Plus Social, Gatik's outlook is far more positive and he is hopeful that he will be able to use his transferable skills in other career paths. In his words, "With PCCS, I have gone places that I didn't know how to get to."