Change • Challenge • Opportunity

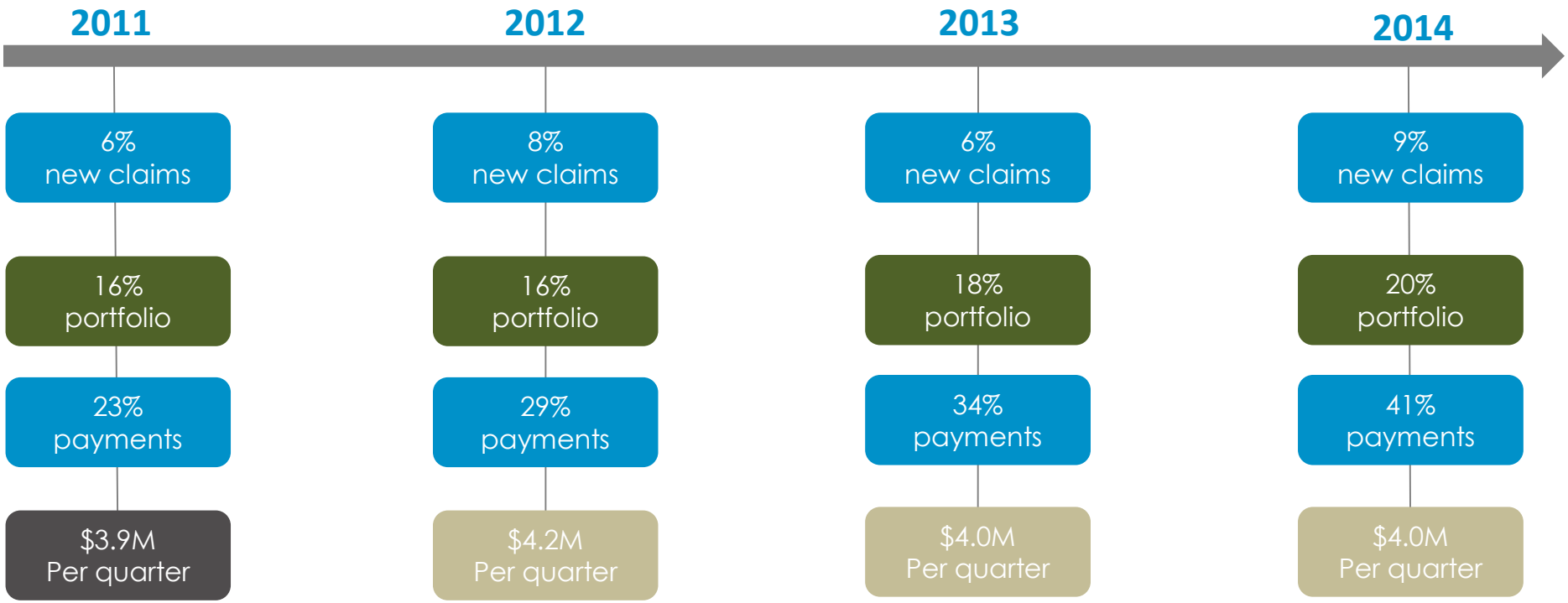
Injury & Disability Schemes Seminar

12 - 14 November 2017 • Sofitel • Brisbane

Actuaries Institute

Implementing an evidenced based approach to psychological injury management

Andrew McGarity Fire & Rescue NSW


2011
2012
2013
2014
6% new claims
16% portfolio
23% payments
$3.9M Per quarter
8% new claims
16% portfolio
29% payments
$4.2M Per quarter
6% new claims
18% portfolio
34% payments
$4.0M Per quarter
9% new claims
20% portfolio
41% payments
$4.0M Per quarter

FRNSW Psychological Injury Management

- 21.4% of psychological injuries due to work pressure
- 15.5% of psychological injuries due to exposure to trauma
- 16.2% of psychological injuries due to alleged Bullying & Harassment
- 31.9% of discharged firefighters were diagnosed with PTSD

"PTSD is a pathology which interacts with the societal context"
Auxemery (2012)

FRNSW Psychological Injury Management

- 40% of psychological claimants aged 50-60
- 31.6% of psychological claimants aged 60+

"The development of traumatic memories at the time of stress exposure represents a major vulnerability through repeated environmental triggering of the increasing dysregulation of an individual's neurobiology." (McFarlane, 2010)

FRNSW Psychological Injury Management

"The secret of the care of the patient is in caring for the patient"

Francis Peabody

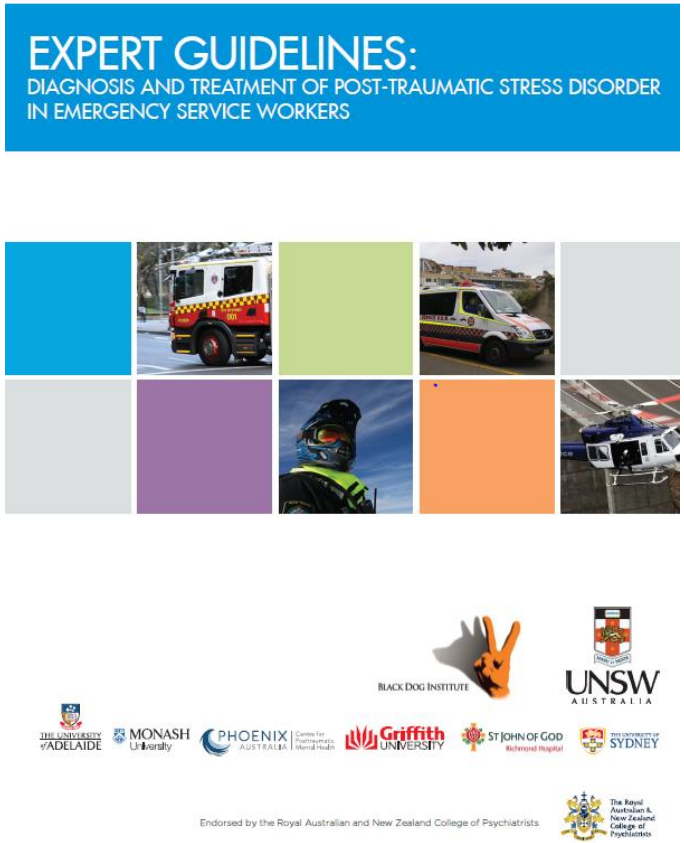
FRNSW Psychological Injury Management

- Implementation of a systematic evidenced based process that is
  - implemented consistently between EML and FRNSW
  - focussed on accessing treatment and support, rather than legislation.
  - Consistent with the goals of the organisation
  - Focussed on the individual, not the diagnosis

FRNSW Psychological Injury Management

- Accurate diagnosis is critical for treatment, not liability.
- Early, holistic evidence based treatment needs to be pre-approved to minimise delays.
- Managers, supervisors and peers have a very significant role in recovery.
- A lack of compliance may be a sign of injury rather than non compliance.
- Medical discharge from the service needs to be managed compassionately.

Change • Challenge • Opportunity
Injury & Disability Schemes Seminar



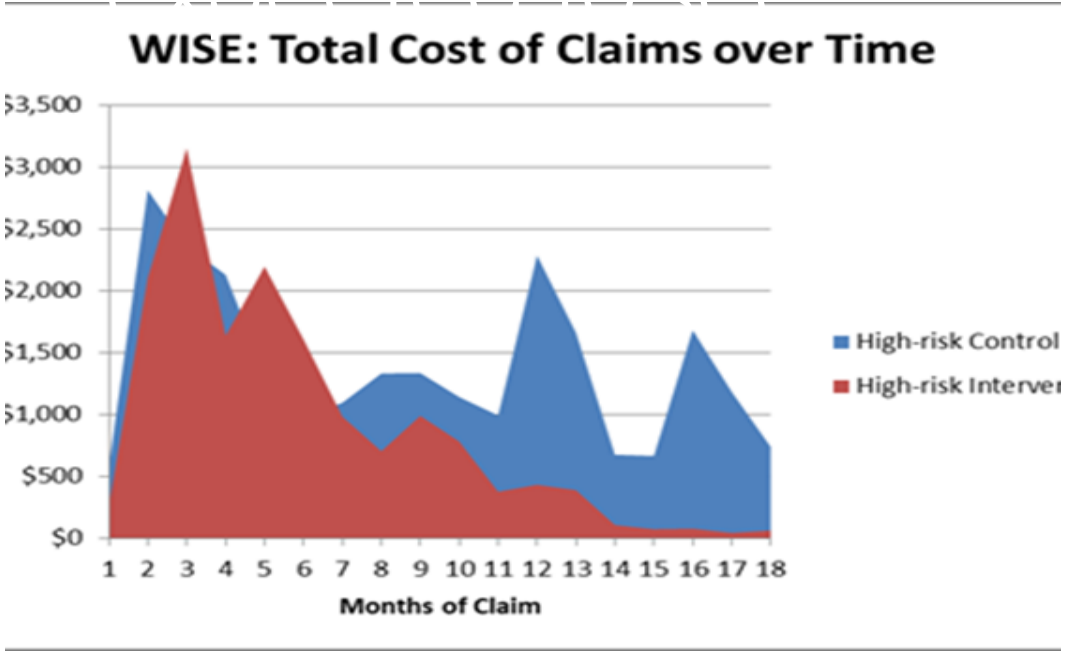
Actuaries Institute

EXPERT GUIDELINES: DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER IN EMERGENCY SERVICE WORKERS

LAUNCHED IN OCTOBER 2015

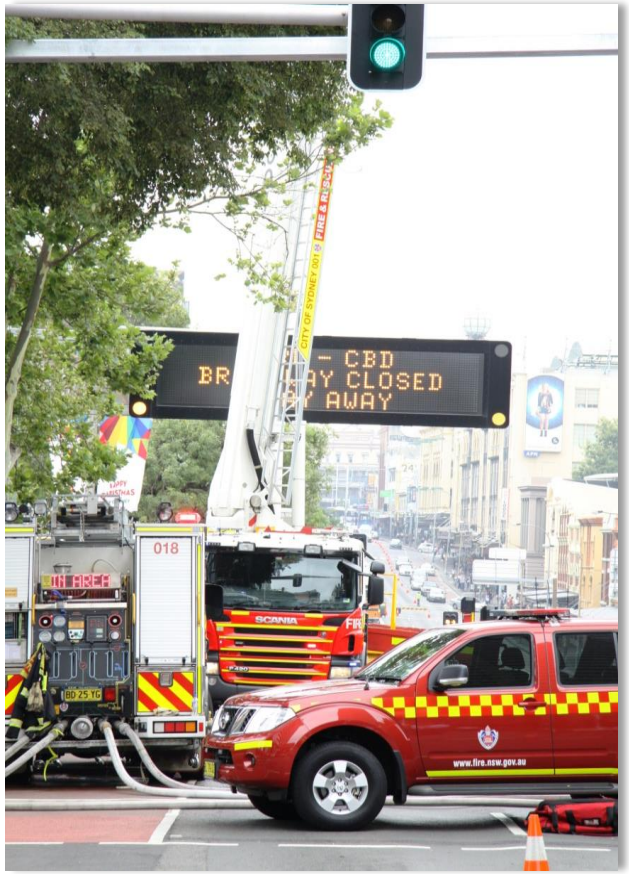
- ***Given the debt that society owes these workers, it is imperative that we ensure that those who do become unwell as a result of their emergency service work get the best possible treatment, we hope these guidelines will help this occur."***
- ***A/Prof Sam Harvey***

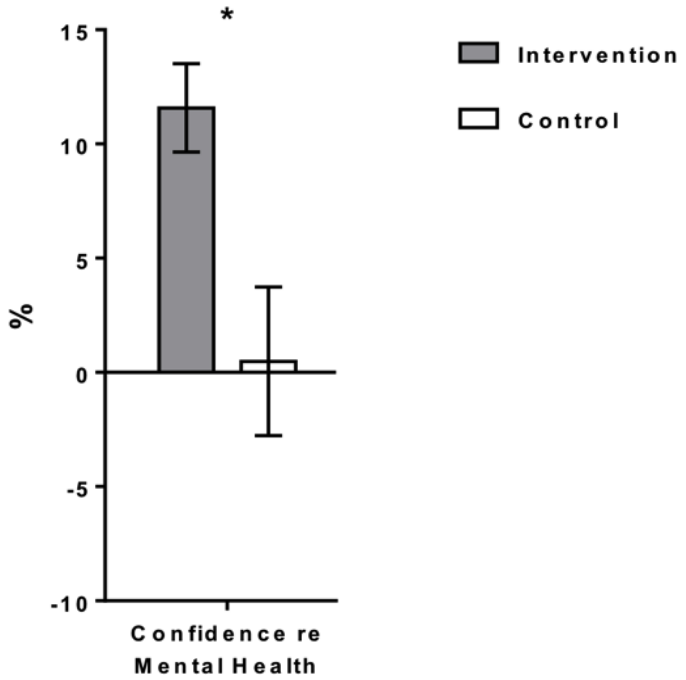
- Prevention
  - Resilience at Work
  - FITMIND
  - Critical Incident Support, EAP, Chaplains
  - Mental Health Training
- Diagnosis
  - FRNSW Initial assessment based on guidelines
  - FRNSW PTSD book
  - Systematic Psycho-social process



Reproduced with permission. Thanks to Prof Michael Nicholas & research partners iCare, EML, Dept of Health, & University of Sydney.

- Treatment
  - Holistic approach
  - Psychological diagnosis directed by initial psychological assessment
  - Systematic process to enact internal and external supports
  - Treatment and independent panels to monitor
  - Suitable duties options
  - Redeployment process
  - FRNSW Durability Programme





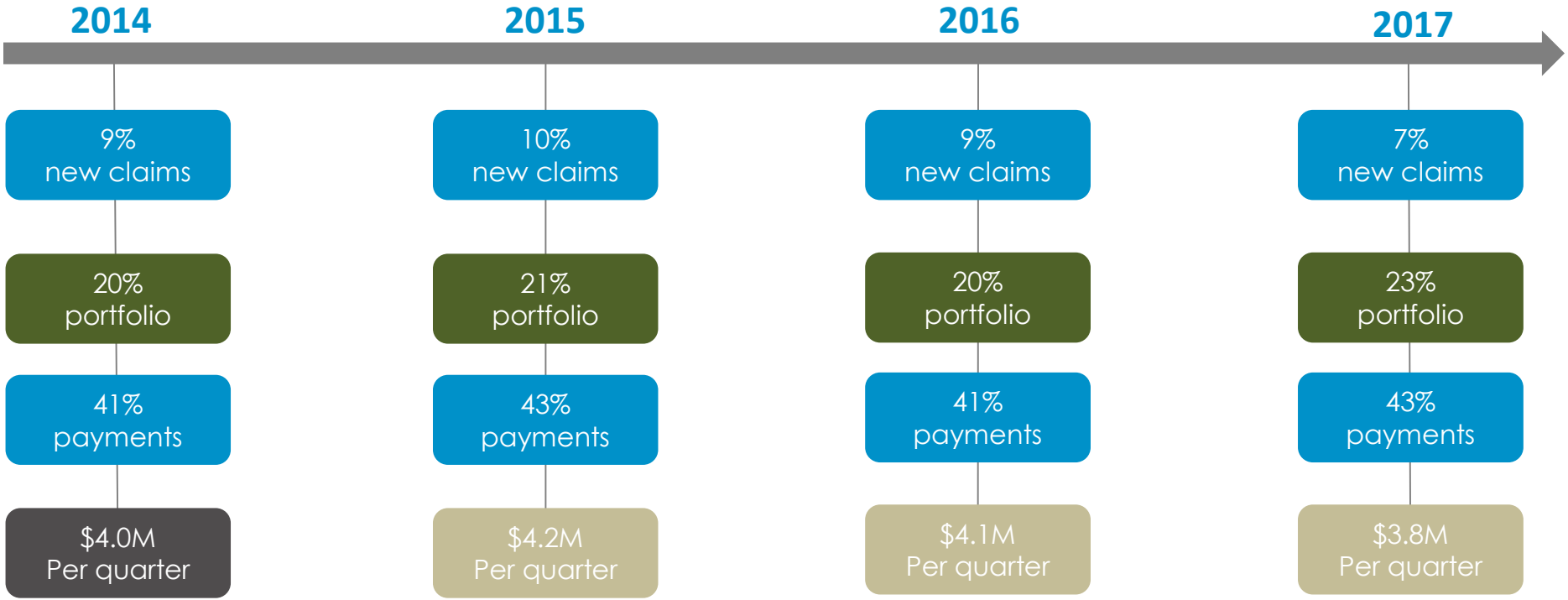
- Reproduced with permission and thanks to A/Prof Sam Harvey & Blackdog Institute

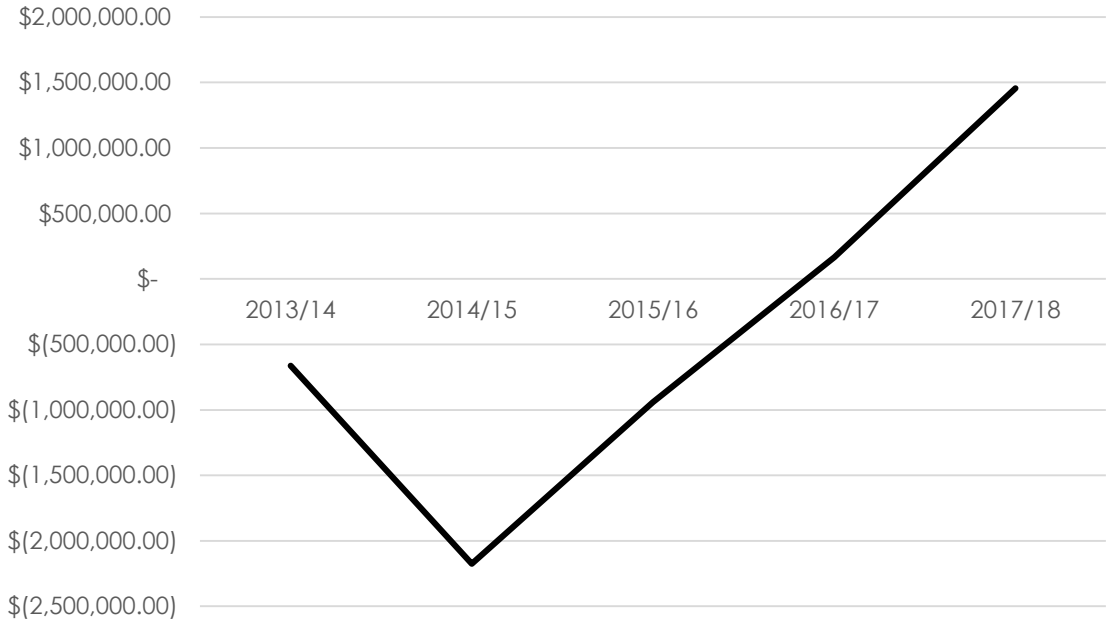
- FRNSW Command
  - RESPECT & Mental Health First Aid training
  - Command Peers

- Investigations
  - Timing based on recovery
  - Flexibility offered
  - Use of peers
  - Factual used for future reference

- Return to Work
  - Health Benefits of Good Work
  - Suitable duties options
- Medical Discharge
  - Transitional counselling
  - Qualification
  - Vocational Counselling and assessment
  - Job seeking panel with individualised focus

- TMF Risk Management Award & PIEF Award
- FRNSW average psychological claim $13073, compared to $18006 for NSW Emergency Services
- Total premium reduced 22% in the past 5 years


2014
9%
new claims
20%
portfolio
41%
payments
$4.0M
Per quarter
2015
10%
new claims
21%
portfolio
43%
payments
$4.2M
Per quarter
2016
9%
new claims
20%
portfolio
41%
payments
$4.1M
Per quarter
2017
7%
new claims
23%
portfolio
43%
payments
$3.8M
Per quarter



FRNSW Deposit Premium

" Society does not consist of individuals but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand. "

Karl Marx