

6 August 2018

Statement to News.com.au about Glenn Dickson and TPD Assist

As a profit-for-members fund our sole purpose is to act in the best interests of all our 1.3 million members, and we strongly believe that our TPD Assist insurance product serves this purpose.

It is a unique product that offers members a cost-effective default level of insurance to cover them if they become ill or injured, while at the same time ensuring excessive insurance premiums don't erode the balances of members' retirement savings. It is a product that has been designed to focus on early intervention, occupational rehabilitation and, where possible, helping members return to work. It was developed after 18 months of research and consultation with hundreds of Sunsuper members who had previously been through the claims process. These members told us that as part of their recovery process they wanted help to get job-ready. In fact:

- almost 70% wanted assistance in vocational rehabilitation, retraining or up-skilling, and
- 66% wanted help finding a job.

Both of these benefits are offered as part of the product's features free of charge. To further support this, in an in-depth study of members who had previously been paid a TPD claim, Sunsuper also found that 36% were working or actively seeking employment within three years.

In Mr Dickson's case, Sunsuper and our insurer have been working closely with him to support his plans to open and manage a gym. Our insurer has been providing funding for business coaching sessions, as well as a Level 1 Strength and Coaching course and functional upgrading sessions with an exercise physiotherapist – all of which Mr Dickson has been actively engaged with. These are services which he may not have had access to at no cost if not for TPD Assist.

To help him in his plans to return to work, our insurer will continue to provide business coaching sessions, including helping him:

- develop a marketing plan for his business,
- complete an Excel course,
- choose a software programme for his client management, accounting and HR needs,
- provide budgeting support, and
- formalise a business plan.

We would like to confirm that the claims that a member needs to keep their account open with Sunsuper in order to keep getting their TPD Assist payments are completely untrue.

We know that personal injury law firms don't like the TPD Assist product as it eats into their potential profits. In fact, we observe lawyers taking up to 60% of members' claim payments in fees. It's for this reason that we encourage members who wish to make a claim to contact us directly to avoid paying large sums to lawyers unnecessarily.