

**Dr Venerina Johnston**  
Director



## Biography

Venerina is an Occupational Health Physiotherapist with extensive experience in occupational rehabilitation and injury prevention from the perspective of the researcher, employer, provider, and insurer. She is recognised as a national and international expert in the prevention and management of compensable musculoskeletal injuries. Her 115 publications use qualitative and quantitative methodologies to test workplace interventions for the reduction of musculoskeletal problems, develop a tool to assess risk for musculoskeletal injury in the workplace and assess physical and psychosocial risk factors (and their interaction) for injury. Her work has informed policy related to return to work after compensable injuries (e.g. cited by Safe Work Australia National Return to Work Strategy 2020 – 2030). Her expertise in rehabilitation and return to work is valued by the Australian Rehabilitation Providers Association with repeat invitations to judge for the biennial Excellence in Workplace Rehabilitation Awards. As a specialist in prevention and management of work-related musculoskeletal injuries, she has led the teaching of ergonomics and occupational rehabilitation to undergraduate UQ physiotherapy students. As one of Australia's leading researchers, she was invited by SafeWork Australia to the national inter-professional roundtable discussion for the development of the National Return to Work Strategy.

## Qualifications

Doctor of Philosophy (Occupational Health Physiotherapy), The University of Queensland  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours) The University of Queensland  
Graduate Diploma in Work Disability Prevention, Université de Sherbrooke, Canada  
Graduate Certificate in Occupational Health & Safety, University of Southern Queensland

## Memberships

- Injury Management Advisory Group for the Queensland Police Service
- Human Factors & Ergonomics Society of Australia
- Australian Rehabilitation Providers Association
- Australian Physiotherapy Association
- Member of the scientific committee, the International Commission on Occupational Health Congress, 2022; and the Australian Occupational Health Physiotherapy conference, 2021

## Selected Publications

1. **Johnston et al.** Supervisor Competencies for Supporting Return to Work: A Mixed-Methods Study. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*. 2015;25(1):3-17
2. **Johnston et al.** A cluster-randomized trial of workplace ergonomics and neck-specific exercise versus ergonomics and health promotion for office workers. *BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders*. 2021;22:68.
3. Donovan M, Khan A, **Johnston V.** Exploring associations of employee reports on safety climate, disability management and labour management with work characteristics and injury at an Australian poultry meat processing plant. *Safety Science*. 2020;126(104659)
4. Donovan M, Khan A, **Johnston V.** The effect of a workplace-based early intervention program on work-related musculoskeletal compensation outcomes in poultry meat processing workers. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*. 2017;27:24-34

For more information, see <https://researchers.uq.edu.au/researcher/1249>