



Everything else is just plasterboard

Media Release  
For Immediate Release

## **Gyprock and Arthritis NSW are educating tradies on maintaining better health practices**

Tradespeople, especially those in the construction and manufacturing industry, are susceptible to developing arthritis due to the physical and demanding work they put their body through each day. CSR Gyprock has taken the initiative to work alongside Arthritis NSW, to inform plasterers of best practices to assist in preventing and managing the condition with the aim to prolong their career and improve general wellbeing.

According to Safe Work Australia, between 2010 – 2011 and 2014 – 2015, tradies made up 30 per cent of Australia's workforce, but represented 58 per cent of serious claims for workers' compensation. The incidence rate was three times the rate of all other occupations with around 190 serious claims made each day.

Musculoskeletal disorders, of which the most common type being arthritis, are a serious health problem that makes up 15 per cent of the compensation claims.<sup>i</sup> Arthritis involves inflammation of the joints, causing pain, stiffness and disability. Due to its progressive nature and chronicity, the cost of treating and living with arthritis is higher than any other chronic illness.

By 2050, Arthritis NSW projects that there will be 7 million people affected by arthritis, with 2.4 million being of working age – that's 11 per cent of the workforce.<sup>ii</sup> Beyond the impact on the individual, there are significant impacts to business, the health system and economy. Over half of \$7.6 billion related to arthritis is attributed to productivity costs reflecting reduced employment rates and an increase in absenteeism, resulting from arthritic conditions.

Regular exercise and stretching has been found to improve joint mobility, flexibility, muscular strength, posture and balance. To prevent, protect and reduce the impact of arthritis, health professional Andrew Cairns (Health Services Manager at Arthritis NSW), has overseen the development of a series of simple videos demonstrating stretching and safe lifting techniques – which tradesman can easily adopt prior to working on the tools. These can be accessed via Club Gyprock or the Arthritis NSW website.

"The exercises are easy to implement on a daily basis taking around 10 minutes a day, and can have a profound effect on minimising injury, maintaining correct posture and ensuring longevity in the workplace," says Mr Cairns. "After a hard day's work, spending 10 to 15 minutes in a heated pool doing simple stretching will help to maintain proper function and sooth sore joints. A warm shower can also be effective for sore joints."

Gyprock has worked with Arthritis NSW to communicate these prevention options to ensure the long-term health of the plastering industry workforce and has produced videos demonstrating warm up and cool down exercises for tradies.



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View the video here: <https://youtu.be/AZfr9dvmnZY>

For further information visit [www.gyprock.com.au](http://www.gyprock.com.au), [www.arthritisnsw.org.au](http://www.arthritisnsw.org.au) or call 1800 011 041.

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**For more information, please contact:**

Giarne Wedes | Niche Marketing Group | 02 8585 4318 | [giarne@nichegroup.com.au](mailto:giarne@nichegroup.com.au)

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/infographic-serious-claims-tradies>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://arthritisnsw.org.au/arthritis/latest-statistics/>