

Case Study: Bruce is Forced to Fight the System

Bruce

Bruce, a 43-year-old father of four, was badly injured while working as a forklift operator in a poorly lit and untidy yard in 2001.

As he was moving around the yard on dusk, he stepped back onto a steel ball, slipped and landed on another steel ball.

He was taken to hospital and underwent numerous x-rays and CT scans. The scans revealed damage to the discs in his neck. Bruce was referred to a neurosurgeon, and within a week he was booked in for surgery.

After a painful six weeks, Bruce returned to work on light duties, although he still experienced pain in his arms, shoulders and neck. He later underwent another operation.

After a further injury while helping a fellow worker repair a mill, he had MRI scans which revealed injuries to another two discs in his spine. He was admitted to hospital for a week and underwent further surgery. His employment was then terminated.

His first set of injuries was assessed at just 6 per cent, meaning he was unable to claim compensation for pain and suffering as he did not meet the threshold. The second set of injuries was assessed at 15 per cent impairment, but the insurer disagreed with this assessment.

“It’s really hard to keep fighting and fighting just to get what you should be entitled to.”

– Bruce

Bruce has been unable to find employment since his position was terminated. He is in constant pain and there has been substantial financial strain on the family. He believes the compensation system is a disgrace.

“How can a doctor see me for an hour and know what my life has become?” Bruce says.

“They have made it such a hassle. It’s really hard to keep fighting and fighting just to get what you should be entitled to.”

The legal barriers to fair compensation in NSW are too harsh. They need to be changed.

Contact your local MP to make your views known. Nothing will change unless you take action.

For more information visit www.faircompensation.com.au or phone 1800 357 596.

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