**Transcript: Career Prospects and advise for people interested in a career as a Rehabilitation Counsellor**

Core issues discussed:

* Amount of opportunities: career prospects excellent
* Prospects moving forward:
* Impact of *National Disability Insurance Scheme*
* Using your interests and motivate to carve a career.

Some useful further sources of information related to career prospects related to becoming a Rehabilitation Counsellor:

* Visit the website for the peak national body *in Rehabilitation Counselling in Australia: The Australian Society of Rehabilitation Counsellors inc.* <http://www.asorc.org,au/>
* *Return to Work* matters <http://www.rtwmatters.org/>

To become a Rehabilitation Counsellor it is typical that students complete both undergraduate and postgraduate studies such as that listed below:

**Undergraduate study:**

* The Bachelor of Health Science (major in rehabilitation Counselling)
* Psychology degree (completion of 3 or 4 programs)
* Other allied health undergraduate programs

**Postgraduate study:**

* An *ASORC* approved postgraduate program such as the *Masters of Health Sciences (Rehabilitation Counselling)*

**Paul:** How would you rate the current and future career prospects of a Rehabilitation Counsellor? What do we think as a panel?

**Michael**: I’m really excited about the future of Rehabilitation Counselling and I suppose being involved in the peak professional body part of what we’re doing is engaging with the Federal Government and the State Government to have a seat on the table. So when they are considering legislative changes to *WorkCover* or transport accidents or Compulsory Third party or their policy on rehabilitation generally we’d like to be there. So we’re more and more pushing for that. But with the *NDIS* that’s coming on stream, I think this whole thing I mentioned earlier about this budgetary change where they are going to be look at people transitioning from *DSP* which has been an ongoing thing, but that’s obviously been targeted for the moment – that’s an exciting area for rehabilitation. But as I said earlier, because Rehabilitation Counselling lends itself to so many different areas, you don’t necessarily need to be employed in the Rehabilitation sector perse either and that’s what’s good about it. My background is in Psychology, in fact I did my Behavioural Science degree here at *La Trobe University* many many years ago. So, I’ve developed a specialisation in Psychological Injury. So stress claims, Psychological injury, people who have got mental health conditions – assisting them make the transition back to work and to normal life and that’s very rewarding. So, the skies the limit really and there are opportunities evolving all the time. It’s a matter of having your ears to the ground all the time and making sure you are in the profession and by being involved in the profession, like *ASORC* for example, you get some exposure to PD’s, network, you become a student member, you progress through the membership ranks through to associate, then to full and those have advantages for you in terms of professionally, those categories. The idea is, I suppose is to improve your professional standing, have you network with people, continuous development. We’ve introduced the *CSPD* system which we are launching in July. We are really becoming a lot more rigorous and I guess in preparing us for the next move which is really trying to improve our profile nationally and as I said earlier, to have a seat on the board or a seat at the table where important decision making happens. So I am really looking forward and am optimistic about the future of Rehabilitation Counselling.

**Paul:** So you’re saying career prospects are excellent and the National Disability Insurance Scheme is likely to have a positive influence as well.

**Michael:** For sure.

**Paul:** In what ways do you see that having an influence?

**Michael:** Well, I think because clients are going to have more say over their treatment and over their rehab and what goals they set themselves, we can become involved, Rehabilitation Counselling can become involved in that and offer services – whether it be on a contractual basis, I don’t exactly know how the model is going to operate at this point, but there are going to be opportunities for people to be able to tender or to offer their Occupational Rehab or Rehab services to the *NDIS* and to clients individually. In a way, to be able to then work with these clients to assist them and to rehabilitate them.

**Paul:** What advise would you have for someone who is interested in a career as a Rehabilitation Counsellor?

**Janette:** I would say, to remain open minded and curious and see where opportunity takes you. I started on a particular pathway myself and I don’t think that determines your future. So if you pick a place to start in terms of your career, it’s perhaps the stepping stone to where you might be next. I think that really, it’s entirely in your hands to what your interests, motivations and passions are. If we work with our passions then we are likely to remain engaged for longer.