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Media Release

Office workers still causing a pain in the neck

“Despite harping on for years about how office workers can avoid neck and shoulder pain leading to headaches and ongoing sickness, many Auckland workers continue to cause themselves unnecessary pain and injury” Says Karen Heffey, Director and Occupational Health Advisor for New Zealand’s leading Health, Safety and Wellness Provider – Company Health Services.

“Having recently established a South Auckland presence by forming a partnership with East Tamaki HealthCare and White Cross Accident & Medical we are truly surprised by the number of workplaces in Auckland that haven’t taken simple steps to avoiding ergonomic injury.” Say Karen.

“Here are the eight most common issues we come across every day.” Says Karen

1. **One size doesn’t fit all.** If the equipment says ergonomically designed it doesn’t always fix the problem. The chair or desk needs to be setup for the person using it taking into account – height, weight, frequency of use and purpose of use.
2. **Don’t cradle the phone with your neck.** Use a headset or hold it properly. That way you avoid neck and shoulder pain and headaches.
3. **Don’t sit low when typing.** Ensure your elbows are at or above keyboard height and your shoulders are relaxed. Again you will avoid serious shoulder and neck pain.
4. **Don’t over-reach for the mouse or keyboard.** Ensure your arms are not fully extended. This causes real problems with shoulder and upper arm pain.
5. **Don’t hover your fingers over the mouse.** Simply relax and rest your fingers on the mouse or use a mouse wrist rest to avoid forearm pain.
6. **Support your feet.** Ensure your feet are not hanging by lowering the chair or using a footstool. This stops you from suffering lower back pain.
7. **Stop texting with your thumb!** This causes serious pain and inflammation of the wrist. How about just calling the person instead?
8. **Check your monitor distance.** As we age our focal length changes meaning we may need to move the computer screen closer or further away.

To take the Free Online Health and Safety Test visit www.chsl.co.nz/freetest

For more information contact Karen Heffey 021 543 195

ENDS