



provider **networking**

According to Ohio's workers' compensation laws, an injured employee may seek treatment from a physician of their choice who is certified by the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC). While a state-funded employer may not "force" employees to utilize specific medical providers, better results can be achieved by educating employees about local providers who are familiar with your business and understand your needs.

Employers are consumers

Consider all of the health-related services you are involved in organizing for employees. Employment physicals and drug screenings are examples of services that many employers purchase directly from area medical providers. It presents an opportunity to discuss the post-injury treatment for employees with workers' compensation claims. Consider discussing communication protocols, transitional work opportunities, wait-time, and other issues that are important in the management of a workers' compensation claim. Providers are also in business, and recognize the need to satisfy their customers and address their concerns.

Occupational health clinics

Provider networking requires a selection of one or more occupational health clinics to treat your employees in the event of a non-emergency, work-related injury. Some of these "walk-in" clinics are affiliated with hospital systems and some are not. Treatment time is typically much quicker and the cost is considerably lower than hospital emergency rooms.

The occupational health professionals tend to communicate with employers more frequently than other medical providers. They need to have contact information in order

to phone, fax, or email treatment details directly to the employer. In turn, the employer can share pertinent information with the treating physician, such as work requirements and job descriptions.

Alternatives to occupational medicine

If a true occupational health clinic is not available to your employees, explore other options such as local urgent care facilities and meet with them to discuss your needs. Urgent care operations often have different levels of ability to treat a work-related injury and you may find a local facility to be quite capable of serving most of the injury types incurred by your employees.

Secondary providers

It is also important to consider specialists who may have a substantial role in treating your injured employees. Dentists, optometrists, chiropractors and orthopedists are common specialty providers who can have a great deal of influence on the outcomes of your workers' compensation claims. CompManagement Health Systems (CHS) can be a valuable resource to help you gain insight on secondary providers.

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Employee communication

It is crucial for supervisors and employees to understand the network of medical treatment options available to them. This can be easily accomplished at safety meetings by explaining that the providers were chosen because they “specialize” in occupational injuries and they are BWC-certified physicians who understand the BWC billing process. Also, CHS can customize a variety of printed materials to help supervisors and employees properly handle post-injury communications and arrangements.

It’s true that employers cannot force their employees to treat with their preferred providers, but most will comply and appreciate the information.

Communication is the key to reducing workers’ compensation costs. Provider networking can help employers achieve that goal.

Assistance is available

CHS collects a large volume of data on the workers’ compensation claim activity of our client employers. If you would like to discuss the medical treatment options available to your employees for post-injury treatment and management, we encourage you to contact your Account Executive. Our team can help you identify the area medical providers who have been utilized most frequently by your employees through workers’ compensation claims; and provide data on the costs, lost days, communication turnaround time and return-to-work performance associated with these providers.

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