Workers' Comp

A Shot in the Arm to Move Claims Forward During COVID

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Tim Howard

Senior Vice President, Field Case Management

Vaccination allows Genex case managers more opportunities for vital interaction to improve case outcomes

As frontline workers, field case managers are essential in helping injured employees navigate their way through the workers' comp labyrinth to achieve return-to-work goals. And while the COVID pandemic has created new barriers, Genex's field case managers are constantly using their skills to adapt to changes that come their way. In today's Inside Workers' Comp, Tim Howard, Senior Vice President, Field Case Management, explains how the recent availability of COVID vaccines are giving these frontline workers an extra level of safety.

Tom Kerr (TK): Tim, roughly, how many Genex field case managers have received at least the first dose of the COVID vaccine?

Tim Howard: Nationwide, I'd say about 25 percent of our field case management team has currently received the vaccine, and those numbers are increasing daily as it becomes readily available across the country.

TK: Why is it important for these case managers to receive the vaccine as soon as possible?

Howard: Genex follows CDC guidance and recommendations. So, we are proactively encouraging our frontline workers – our field case managers – to receive the vaccine in accordance with their state policies so they, and other parties involved in a case, can feel comfortable with in-person interaction with significantly reduced potential for COVID contraction. We need our case managers to be able to move freely through health care facilities to engage injured employees, providers and other health care professionals and promote the best possible dialogue/interaction leading to positive case outcomes.

TK: What's being done to ensure Genex field case managers have access to the vaccine?

Howard: Since the vaccine is administered on a state-by-state basis, our regional branch managers keep up with the various qualifications and processes for workers' comp case managers to receive the vaccine in the states they cover. We alert our staff on these guidelines and vaccination schedules so they can receive the vaccine the moment it is offered.

TK: What challenges have you faced in meeting this goal?

Howard: As I mentioned before, vaccine deployment and qualifications vary by state, so understanding the inconsistencies for distribution and making sure we have plans in place to achieve our goals can be a challenge, but we're addressing and meeting it.

TK: How does vaccinating field case managers impact workers' comp claims?

Howard: Our field case managers who have received the vaccine report an increased sense of freedom and confidence in meeting with injured employees and other parties to the case. It just increases the comfort level for everyone which will lead to more positive case outcomes.

TK: What other safety measures are your case managers using to protect themselves and injured workers from COVID?

Howard: Genex continues to supply and enforce the use of personal protection equipment when dealing with any sort of in-person field intervention. The Genex Clinical Guidelines Team also continues to update and publish our Coronavirus Guideline, ensuring our case managers have access to the latest information on the virus so they can best protect themselves and those they come in contact with to maintain the health of the injured employees in their care.



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