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Big Picture, Big Success

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Catastrophic Case Management

Meet Lisa Armstrong, BSN, CRRN, RN-BC, CCM

Lisa Armstrong has been a catastrophic case manager for Genex Services for two years. Prior to joining Genex, Lisa worked for 15 years as an ICU and acute rehabilitation RN. She used that experiences to help this injured worker survive a critical head injury and, remarkably, return to work.

The Case

A wood shop machine malfunction caused a piece of molding to launch 100 mph toward a custom cabinet maker, striking him in the right temple. The worker barely survived, sustaining a traumatic brain injury and permanent right-eye vision loss. He underwent two brain surgeries, including a craniotomy as well as reconstruction surgery.

Case Management Impact

Armstrong advocated for the patient and his family, ensuring he be placed in a renowned traumatic brain injury rehab facility. She became the center hub of a complex team of medical and rehab providers, educating each on how the various specialties worked in the “big picture” of advancing the injured worker’s progress and return to employment. Armstrong helped craft a program with outpatient supports allowing the injured worker to return home with a program tailored around his individual needs. Armstrong also looked ahead to other obstacles that would impact the injured worker’s independence—his vision—and sought the treatment of a neuro-ophthalmologist to determine his ability to drive. Thanks to the testing and clearance of this specialist, the injured worker has been placed in a driving rehabilitation program.

Outcome

Armstrong also collaborated closely with the employer, working to make minor adjustments to the worker's job responsibilities, taking into consideration his vision impairment, and developing a new permanent position that meets the needs of both the employer and employee. The injured worker is now working part-time, and is slowly advancing to full duty. It is now projected that he will return to full duty at least ten months before ODG projections. In the words of the injured worker's wife regarding Armstrong's impact on the family: "For the first time in my life I needed someone to lean on. I didn't realize the impact having a case manager would have on my sanity, sense of struggle and daily living."

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