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Field Case Management

Meet Julie Wilcox, RN, MSN, BSN, CRNA

Julie Wilcox, RN, MSN, BSN, CRNA, is a field case manager with an extensive three-decade career in nursing which includes pediatrics, obstetrics and education. She uses her exceptional clinical background to guide injured employees from debilitating injuries to return to work.

The Case

Case managers make the greatest impact when they're assigned to a case soon after the injury occurs. When this doesn't happen, it can significantly delay recovery and often prevent the injured employee from getting back to work. This was the challenge Wilcox faced when assigned to an injured employee mired in eight months of pain and inactivity due to a significant left shoulder injury which rendered him unable to work or perform activities of daily living. With no appropriate treatment path to follow, the injured employee had been prescribed multiple narcotics, anti-inflammatories and muscle relaxants for pain relief to no avail.

Case Management Impact

Upon one of her first visits, the man admitted to Wilcox he felt "the world had given up on him" and was extremely depressed and suicidal. Wilcox initiated a more aggressive treatment strategy, collaborating with orthopedic and pain management specialists. She secured approval to proceed with an extensive shoulder procedure which involved arthroscopic rotator cuff debridement, distal clavicle resection, labral cyst decompression and labrum repair. The case manager worked closely with the surgeon, physical therapists, employer and employee to formulate an appropriate transitional rehabilitation plan. She also prioritized narcotic weening by implementing the Genex Opioid Usage Case Management Care Path and collaborated with the employer to develop regular job and appropriate light-duty accommodations. To facilitate compliance, Wilcox regularly visited and encouraged the injured employee, discussing strategies and goals to assist him through range of motion, strengthening and work conditioning.

Outcome

Wilcox provided safe transition of care, employment and communicated critical interventions that transitioned the injured employee from completely disabled (both physically and mentally) to full-function return to work. This restoration alleviated the employee’s severe depression and anxiety and he credits Wilcox’s work, saying it would never had happened without her persistence and influence.

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