Workers' Comp

2022 Telephonic Heart of Case Management Award Winner

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Nashville, TN

Christine Heil, RN, CCM

A 45-year-old manager of an auto repair company was assisting an employee when a vehicle he was standing near fell off a lift and onto his foot, creating an open fracture of his large right toe with bone puncturing skin. The injured employee was treated at his local hospital emergency department and followed up with treatment at an urgent care center. As days progressed, the toe turned black and the man was informed by the urgent care physician that gangrene had set in and his toe would need to be amputated. This is when Christine Heil, a Genex telephonic case manager, was called onto the case. Realizing such a procedure would permanently affect the employee's gait and activities of daily living, but aware that delaying the procedure could be dangerous, Heil instructed the man to visit a more specialized facility 35 minutes away with a dedicated wound care center so his foot could be diagnosed properly. There, a physician deduced the black appearance was not gangrene but substantial bruising. Instead of amputation, the man underwent toe debridement and hyperbaric treatment. Heil continued managing the case, ensuring the injured employee received adequate treatments and wound care from orthopedic specialists, helping him recover from his injury. The result, a complete return to work within six weeks from the onset of Heil taking the case. Her actions helped save the employee's toe and prevent a claim from spiraling out of control.

Learn how Heil used her critical thinking skills to help an injured employee avoid amputation.

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