Workers' Comp

Celebrating Nurses Week: 7 Days Isn't Enough

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As we say goodbye to another National Nurses Week — Happy 197th birthday, Florence Nightingale — I feel the familiar pang of disappointment. Why is it that we relegate just one week to honor the backbone of our health care system?

To me, it's an injustice, but I don't hear many nurses complaining. Self-recognition is never the driving cause for those who enter the noble profession. Instead, it's a selfless response to a call to help others. So, in the end, the nurse's role is often overlooked; that is, of course, until there's a shortage and we truly realize how much we need them.

Nurses who pursue a career in case management also often fall into the underappreciated category. As Genex Branch Manager Myra Keleher, DNP, RN, CDMS, CCM, recently wrote in a column for *Care Management*, case managers in workers' compensation play a central role in ensuring that injured workers return to their jobs safely and efficiently. However, many are so committed to their jobs and the welfare of their patients, that it's not a priority to stop and educate others on what they do.

This was the fundamental reason Genex launched our Heart of Case Management (HCM) Awards program — to help tell the incredible stories that case managers typically won't. This year's winners each managed the care of injured workers who sustained life-threatening injuries. They not only advocated for these patients and helped them receive appropriate treatment to recover, but also guided them to back-to-work outcomes that others deemed impossible.

As Genex COO Delphia Frisch said at this year's HCM ceremony, "You don't just roll out of bed in the morning and make the decision you're going to be a case manager. It's a studied process, it's with intent and it is earned."

Maybe it's time we all wake up and realize that nurses deserve more than a 7-day celebration.



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